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RUSSIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT DURING THE WAR AND THE UNION OF ZEMSTVOS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE WORLD WAR

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RUSSIAN SERIES

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RUSSIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT DURING THE WAR AND THE UNION OF ZEMSTVOS

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REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION OF ZEMSTVOS IN LONDON DURING THE WAR

WITH INTRODUCTION

By PRINCE GEORGE E. LVOV

PRIME MINISTER IN THE RUSSIAN PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT
FORMERLY PRESIDENT OF THE UNION OF ZEMSTVOS

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

In the autumn of 1914, when the scientific study of the effects of war upon modern life passed suddenly from theory to history, the Division of Economics and History of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace proposed to adjust the program of its researches to the new and altered problems which the War presented. The existing program, which had been prepared as the result of a conference of economists held at Berne in 1911, and which dealt with the facts then at hand, had just begun to show the quality of its contributions; but for many reasons it could no longer be followed out. A plan was therefore drawn up at the request of the Director of the Division, in which it was proposed, by means of an historical survey, to attempt to measure the economic cost of the War and the displacement which it was causing in the processes of civilization. Such an "Economic and Social History of the World War," it was felt, if undertaken by men of judicial temper and adequate training, might ultimately, by reason of its scientific obligations to truth, furnish data for the forming of sound public opinion, and thus contribute fundamentally toward the aims of an institution dedicated to the cause of international peace.

The need for such an analysis, conceived and executed in the spirit of historical research, was increasingly obvious as the War developed, releasing complex forces of national life not only for the vast process of destruction, but also for the stimulation of new capacities for production. This new economic activity, which under normal conditions of peace might have been a gain to society, and the surprising capacity exhibited by the belligerent nations for enduring long and increasing loss—often while presenting the outward semblance of new prosperity—made necessary a reconsideration of the whole field of war economics. A double obligation was therefore placed upon the Division of Economics and History. It was obliged to concentrate its work upon the problem thus presented, and to study it as a whole; in other words, to apply to it the tests and disciplines of history. Just as the War itself was a single event, though penetrating by seemingly unconnected ways to the remotest parts of the world, so the analysis of it must be developed

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according to a plan at once all embracing and yet adjustable to the practical limits of the available data.

During the actual progress of the War, however, the execution of this plan for a scientific and objective study of war economics proved impossible in any large and authoritative way. Incidental studies and surveys of portions of the field could be made and were made under the direction of the Division, but it was impossible to undertake a general history for obvious reasons. In the first place, an authoritative statement of the resources of belligerents bore directly on the conduct of armies in the field. The result was to remove as far as possible from scrutiny those data of the economic life of the countries at war which would ordinarily, in time of peace, be readily available for investigation. In addition to this difficulty of consulting documents, collaborators competent to deal with them were for the most part called into national service in the belligerent countries and so were unavailable for research. The plan for a war history was therefore postponed until conditions should arise which would make possible not only access to essential documents, but also the coöperation of economists, historians, and men of affairs in the nations chiefly concerned, whose joint work would not be misunderstood either in purpose or in content.

Upon the termination of the War, the Endowment once more took up the original plan, and it was found with but slight modification to be applicable to the situation. Work was begun in the summer and autumn of 1918. In the first place a final conference of the Advisory Board of Economists of the Division of Economics and History was held in Paris, which limited itself to planning a series of short preliminary surveys of special fields. Since, however, the purely preliminary character of such studies was further emphasized by the fact that they were directed more especially toward those problems which were then fronting Europe as questions of urgency, it was considered best not to treat them as part of the general survey, but rather as of contemporary value in the period of war settlement. It was clear that not only could no general program be laid down *a priori* by this conference as a whole, but that a new and more highly specialized research organization than that already existing would be needed to undertake the Economic and Social History of the World War, one based more upon national grounds in the first instance, and less upon purely international coöperation. Until the

facts of national history could be ascertained, it would be impossible to proceed with comparative analysis; and the different national histories were themselves of almost baffling intricacy and variety. Consequently the former European Committee of Research was dissolved, and in its place it was decided to erect an Editorial Board in each of the larger countries and to nominate special editors in the smaller ones, who should concentrate, for the present at least, upon their own economic and social war history.

The nomination of these boards by the General Editor was the first step taken in every country where the work has begun. And if any justification were needed for the plan of the Endowment, it at once may be found in the lists of those, distinguished in scholarship or in public affairs, who have accepted the responsibility of editorship. This responsibility is by no means light, involving as it does the adaptation of the general editorial plan to the varying demands of national circumstances or methods of work; and the measure of success attained is due to the generous and earnest coöperation of those in charge in each country.

Once the editorial organization was established, there could be little doubt as to the first step which should be taken in each instance toward the actual preparation of the History. Without documents there can be no history. The essential records of the War, local as well as central, have therefore to be preserved and to be made available for research in so far as is compatible with public interest. But this archival task is a very great one, belonging of right to the Governments and other owners of historical sources and not to the historian or economist who proposes to use them. It is an obligation of ownership; for all such documents are public trust. The collaborators on this section of the War History, therefore, working within their own field as researchers, could only survey the situation as they found it and report their findings in the forms of guides or manuals; and perhaps, by stimulating a comparison of methods, help to further the adoption of those found to be most practical. In every country, therefore, this was the point of departure for actual work; although special monographs have not been written in every instance.

The first stage of the work upon the War History, dealing with little more than the externals of archives, seemed for a while to exhaust the possibilities of research, and had the plan of the History been limited to research based upon official documents, little more

could have been done, for once documents have been labeled "secret" few government officials can be found with sufficient courage or initiative to break open the seal. Thus vast masses of source material essential for the historian were effectively placed beyond his reach, although much of it was quite harmless from any point of view. While war conditions thus continued to hamper research, and were likely to do so for many years to come, some alternative had to be found.

Fortunately such an alternative was at hand in the narrative, amply supported by documentary evidence, of those who had played some part in the conduct of affairs during the War, or who, as close observers in privileged positions, were able to record from first- or at least second-hand knowledge the economic history of different phases of the Great War, and of its effect upon society. Thus a series of monographs was planned consisting for the most part of unofficial yet authoritative statements, descriptive or historical, which may best be described as about halfway between memoirs and blue-books. These monographs make up the main body of the work assigned so far. They are not limited to contemporary war-time studies; for the economic history of the War must deal with a longer period than that of the actual fighting. It must cover the years of "deflation" as well, at least sufficiently to secure some fairer measure of the economic displacement than is possible in purely contemporary judgments.

With this phase of the work, the editorial problems assumed a new aspect. The series of monographs had to be planned primarily with regard to the availability of contributors, rather than of source material as in the case of most histories; for the contributors themselves controlled the sources. This in turn involved a new attitude toward those two ideals which historians have sought to emphasize, consistency and objectivity. In order to bring out the chief contribution of each writer it was impossible to keep within narrowly logical outlines; facts would have to be repeated in different settings and seen from different angles, and sections included which do not lie within the strict limits of history; and absolute objectivity could not be obtained in every part. Under the stress of controversy or apology, partial views would here and there find their expression. But these views are in some instances an intrinsic part of the history itself, contemporary measurements of facts as significant as the

facts with which they deal. Moreover, the work as a whole is planned to furnish its own corrective; and where it does not, others will.

In addition to the monographic treatment of source material, a number of studies by specialists are already in preparation, dealing with technical or limited subjects, historical or statistical. These monographs also partake to some extent of the nature of first-hand material, registering as they do the data of history close enough to the source to permit verification in ways impossible later. But they also belong to that constructive process by which history passes from analysis to synthesis. The process is a long and difficult one, however, and work upon it has only just begun. To quote an apt characterization; in the first stages of a history like this, one is only "picking cotton." The tangled threads of events have still to be woven into the pattern of history; and for this creative and constructive work different plans and organizations may be needed.

In a work which is the product of so complex and varied coöperation as this, it is impossible to indicate in any but a most general way the apportionment of responsibility of editors and authors for the contents of the different monographs. For the plan of the History as a whole and its effective execution the General Editor is responsible; but the arrangement of the detailed programs of study has been largely the work of the different Editorial Boards and divisional Editors, who have also read the manuscripts prepared under their direction. The acceptance of a monograph in this series, however, does not commit the editors to the opinions or conclusions of the authors. Like other editors, they are asked to vouch for the scientific merit, the appropriateness, and usefulness of the volumes admitted to the series; but the authors are naturally free to make their individual contributions in their own way. In like manner the publication of the monographs does not commit the Endowment to agreement with any specific conclusions which may be expressed therein. The responsibility of the Endowment is to History itself—an obligation not to avoid but to secure and preserve variant narratives and points of view, in so far as they are essential for the understanding of the War as a whole.

* * * * *

In the case of Russia, civil war and revolution followed so closely upon the World War that it is almost impossible for history to

measure with any degree of accuracy the effects of the World War itself upon the economic and social life of the country. Those effects were so distorted by the forces let loose in the post-war years and so confused with the disturbances of the revolutionary era that the attempt to isolate the phenomena of the War from the data of civil war and to analyze the former according to the plan followed in the other national series of this collection has been a task of unparalleled difficulty. Over and above the intricacies of the problem and its illusive character, the authors of the Russian monographs have had to work under the most discouraging circumstances and with inadequate implements of research. For those who know the scarcity of the documentary material available, it will be a matter of no little surprise to find, in the pages of this Russian Series, narratives and substantiating data which measure up so well in comparison with those prepared by the collaborators in other countries. The achievement of the Russian Division of the History is, all things considered, the most remarkable section of the entire collection. This is due, in the first place, to the fact that the authors, all of them exiles who live in foreign lands, have brought to this task not only the scientific disciplines of their own special fields but also an expert knowledge drawn from personal experience which in several instances reached to the highest offices of State.

While these volumes in the Russian History constitute so very considerable an achievement, they cannot in the very nature of the case cover with adequate statistical or other specific data many of the problems with which they deal. No one is more conscious of their shortcomings in this regard than the authors themselves. Nevertheless, with inadequate material and under hampering circumstances they have prepared a body of text and a record which, if admittedly incomplete as history, contains at least one element that would otherwise be lost for the future understanding of this great crisis in human affairs, an element which no other generation working from Russian archives could ever supply. We have here the mature comment upon events by contemporaries capable of passing judgment and appraising values, so that over and above the survey of phenomena there is presented a perspective and an organization of material which will be a contribution to history hardly less important than the substance of the monographs.

The Russian Series was in the first instance planned by one of the most distinguished of Russian scholars who had long been a resident of England, Sir Paul Vinogradoff, Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence at the University of Oxford. To the planning of the Series Sir Paul gave much time and thought. His untimely death in December, 1925, prevented him from seeing its fruition or from assuming the editorial responsibility for the texts. Nevertheless, the Series as a whole remains substantially as he had planned it.

The present volume presents a unique chapter in the history of the World War and, indeed, a unique chapter in human history. Most of the other volumes in this collection deal either with national organization and administration or else with the effects of the War upon social and economic life. This deals with both. By a paradox the very inadequacy of the Russian Imperial Government in economic and social matters threw back upon the organs of local self-government, especially the zemstvos, the task of improvising what might be termed an auxiliary supply organization. The service thus inaugurated became almost a state within a state and the register of its activities to a very large degree the measure of the direct impact of the War upon Russian social and economic life.

The term "zemstvo" became a familiar word in the literature of the Western Powers during the hard-pressed years 1915 and 1916. Wherever confidence was lacking in the capacity of the Russian bureaucracy, the American and British public were reassured by statements in the daily press that Slavic initiative had risen to the task of organizing Russia's gigantic resources and that an organization had sprung to the fore capable of taking over all the unperformed tasks of war-time government. A fantastic myth was created of the capacity of this body to supply the Russian armies at the front and the population behind the lines; its scope of action was said to cover everything from the work of a national Red Cross to that of a War Industries Board.

The pages which follow will show, for the first time, just what was accomplished. It is the only authoritative, historical record yet published of the work of the zemstvo. Its authoritative nature can hardly be questioned, for the judicious, careful, and sober story is not only convincingly told and bears the marks of personal familiarity with the details of zemstvo history, but the narrative is

guaranteed as well by the *imprimatur* of Prince Lvov, Prime Minister of Russia in the days when the zemstvos were at their height, and their outstanding champion and national leader.

Personal familiarity with details, however, does not by itself supply sufficient data for the author of a text like this. Memories of events become vague and elusive, especially when so many others supervene, as has been the case in recent Russian history. There is no substitute for documents. Fortunately, the Hoover War Library of Stanford University had made provision for just this kind of exigency and with rare generosity has placed the documents necessary for this study at the disposal of the authors working in Europe. It is not too much to say that without this scientific coöperation the present volume could not have been written.

The chief significance of this monograph, however, does not lie in the formal study of an organization fighting its way to efficiency through the heart of a national crisis. It lies rather in the purely human story of a nation stricken by war and meeting its demands with energy, and anxious, if sometimes blundering, activity. There is no effort here to force the note in literary phrase or imaginative word picture, but the events themselves are chronicled with a directness of statement and a richness of detail which make it fitting to recall that M. Polner, who chiefly shaped the text in its present form, was a lifelong friend of Tolstoy.

J. T. S.

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INTRODUCTION

BY PRINCE GEORGE E. LVOV

The history of the Russian people presents remarkable instances of rapid transitions. A country with an immense territory covering one-sixth of the surface of the globe and with a large agricultural population, traditionally peace loving and conservative, Russia occasionally surprises the world by outbursts of feverish activity. A foreign observer may find difficulty in explaining it.

Two forces were struggling in Russia. Historical and geographical reasons demanded the formation of a strong central government for the defense of the frontiers against the enemy. On the other hand, the progress of the nation called for freedom from government tutelage and decentralization. When the Government was enlightened enough to adopt a liberal policy, the country rapidly moved toward progress; but as soon as the Government became absorbed in increasing its own despotic powers and encroached upon the freedom of the nation, the era of progress was brought to an end. As the educational standards of the nation improved, the struggle between the two forces became more and more apparent. The reactionary elements clung to the view that the future of Russia depended on the preservation of that autocracy which had built up a powerful state; while the liberals believed that only the free development of the resources of the nation might serve as a foundation for its future greatness.

The second half of the last century and the beginning of the present one, up to the Revolution of February-March, 1917, presents an excellent instance of the struggle between the two forces. It opened with the transition from the reactionary reign of Nicholas I to the enlightened and liberal rule of Alexander II. The reign of Nicholas I marks the high point in the development of Russian absolutism. The whole country trembled before her master. Everything was subject to the will of the Tsar. After the deportation to Siberia of the Decembrists who attempted to conspire against the Emperor and planned for the introduction of a constitutional government, Nicholas ruled Russia with an iron hand. Life and property were entirely at the mercy of the police. Every vestige of freedom was ruthlessly

exterminated and the country merely existed, initiative being replaced by the orders of officialdom.

A strong feeling of disaffection, a desire for freedom from the yoke of autocracy were rapidly gaining strength. The liberal ideas which were spreading in western Europe found favorable ground in Russia. The Russian liberal movement may be traced to the reign of Nicholas I and it counted among its followers persons intimate with the Tsar, some of whom were leaders of the movement. Their ideas inspired Alexander, the heir to the throne; and when his father died, the whole of Russia, expecting from the new Tsar and his advisers far-reaching changes, drew a deep breath of relief. These expectations were fulfilled. Alexander II deserves the name, "Tsar Liberator," given to him by the grateful country which he freed from the chains in which it was kept by his predecessors. In the history of Russia his reign is known as the Era of Great Reforms. The principal among these reforms were the abolition of serfdom, the reform of the law courts, and the introduction of local government. These three reforms completely changed the life of the country. Russians came to feel that they were citizens. The rights and duties now vested in them brought to an end their passive acceptance of orders from above and made them realize the dignity of free human beings. The thirty-four provinces where local government was introduced made a gallant effort to free themselves from the ignorance and submerged state in which they were kept by the central government, and endeavored to make good the time that had been lost. Real creative work, the building of the nation by the people themselves, was now in full swing.

The fundamental idea of the zemstvos was the decentralization of the Government and the transfer of certain rights and duties to the population itself. The Zemstvo Act provided that the new institutions of local government should take care of local needs and promote the well-being of the population. They were divided into provincial and district zemstvos. They were given the power of levying taxes. Their duties included the organization of the supply of foodstuffs, administration of charitable relief, upkeep of roads, insurance, maintenance of hospitals and administration of public health, fire protection, improvement of sanitary conditions in villages, promotion of education, advancement of agriculture, commerce, and industry. This enumeration, which is far from being complete, seems

to indicate that the limits of the zemstvo work were not definitely indicated; they could be expanded with the development of the work itself. At the time the law was enacted those activities which fell within the province of the work of the zemstvos were still in their infancy; some of them did not even exist. The autocratic government was not interested in the advancement of such activities and its ignorance of local conditions hindered all attempts in the right direction even where they were made.

The institutions of the zemstvos were built on the foundation of free elections and responsibility to the population. The original franchise was very broad. Members of the zemstvo assemblies were elected for three years. The whole work of the institutions of local government, therefore, was carried on under the control of the voters. But at the same time the zemstvos were responsible to the local officers of the central government and must accept the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior.

The sound foundation on which the institutions of local government were built brought about results which surprised those in authority. The bureaucratic circles were in the habit of looking upon the population as a purely passive body that was capable of doing only what it was told to do, and they did not expect that it could perform successfully the new duties imposed upon the zemstvos, or find responsible leaders with initiative and vision. The ignorance in which the masses had been kept for centuries had accustomed the Government to think of them as something passive, devoid of imagination, complacently accepting any command, and grateful for guidance from those higher up. It appeared however that the invigorating breezes of self-government brought with them new life for the country which had been paralyzed by a *régime* of repressions, just as spring revives nature after the long winter's sleep. It is to be expected that in some instances the work did not proceed smoothly and there were many days of hard work and bitter disappointment. But still it was a period of creative work, "From slough to slough, but what a wonderful spring," as one of the leaders of the Great Reforms put it.

The progress of the zemstvo work was truly remarkable. There was no lack of men. The educated elements of the community were only too eager to help. A body of zemstvo workers gradually grew up which differed from the class of government employees. It may

seem that the bureaucracy and the zemstvos were both working for the same cause, and that they merely performed separate parts of the same job. As a matter of fact, however, they were divided by a gulf, a gulf which separated the conception of autocracy from that of local government. The government employees were brought up in the old tradition; they were, often unwillingly, the supporters of the bureaucratic centralized system of government, which appeared to them to be the source of progress. Living in the seclusion of their offices and responsible only to their chiefs, they knew nothing but the *régime* they were serving and on which their personal welfare depended.

The zemstvo workers were a complete antithesis to the government employees. They were creating real life, they gave themselves entirely to the idea they served, they were willing to make any sacrifice, and many of them were real martyrs and devoted themselves to the welfare of the people, working often under conditions of great hardship. Doctors, engineers, teachers, statisticians, agronomists, veterinary surgeons, all the educated men and women who worked in the zemstvos, not as elected representatives of the population, but as hired employees, were considered by the bureaucrats as a particularly dangerous element, because they preferred to follow their convictions and to serve the people in the often unattractive conditions of the Russian countryside rather than to take their ease in the relative comfort and security of a government department. The elected members of the zemstvo assemblies, an office which required property qualifications, were usually referred to by the bureaucrats as the "second element"; while the hired members of the zemstvo staff were described as the "third element" and were considered by the Government as a well-organized, united revolutionary force. There is no doubt that the "third element" consisted of representatives of the educated classes who were opposed to the Government, but it is also true that it was one of the most active and constructive elements in the zemstvos, that it was brought up in the work of local government, acquired business experience, worked out under the forays of the bureaucracy a definite ideology, and developed remarkable energy. In a relatively short time the zemstvos achieved excellent results. They concentrated on the important aspects of their work instead of the secondary feature which the Government tried to force upon them. They built up a powerful organization,

which overcame all obstacles placed in its path. In the opinion of the Government the zemstvos should have developed those aspects of their work which were in the nature of tutelage over the population, while the zemstvos themselves were particularly eager to emphasize that side which promoted initiative and freedom.

The organization of the service of public health by the zemstvos gave Russia full right to be proud of it. The network of free hospitals and dispensaries, preventive measures against epidemics, sanitation, lunatic asylums, sanatoriums—all these institutions for the protection of the health of the nation were built on a harmonious scheme with due regard to local requirements and needs. Elementary education, to the development of which the Government was particularly opposed, was effectively promoted by the establishment of a rapidly increasing number of schools where instruction was given free of charge. The advancement of agriculture could be seen in the rapid increase in the amount of agricultural machinery, the larger sale of seeds from zemstvo depots, and the organization of model cattle-breeding farms. Insurance and credit on easy terms for small farmers were new departures which laid the foundation for the future prosperity of the rural community.

The limits of the zemstvo work which were merely outlined by the law showed a pronounced tendency to extend. In every direction the zemstvos were ready to go much farther than was intended by the law. There was no limit to the natural expansion of local government. The various economic aspects of life were strongly interdependent and they were all elements in the progressive movement of a country. The Government soon became aware of the tendency of local government to encroach upon what it considered its prerogatives, a tendency which was deemed dangerous.

As it always happens in history, a period of liberal ideas was followed by one of reaction. It originated among the landed gentry who took part in the institutions of local government and brought with them the traditions of the bureaucracy who had formerly looked to the Tsar for direction and expected their recompense from him. Deprived of their serfs, with whom they now met in the institutions of local government on a footing of equality, the members of the gentry felt humiliated and unjustly deprived of their wealth and looked for an opportunity to recover their former privileges. This reactionary section of the zemstvo assemblies found support among the

bureaucrats and spared no effort to limit the scope of the zemstvo work and to prevent its growth.

The reactionary section represented the majority of the zemstvo assemblies, but morally it was weaker than the minority which was supported by the progressive members of the gentry, real friends of the people, who understood that the happiness of the country lay in the principles of equality and freedom. The minority was conscious that it was fighting for the right cause. It found support in the conditions of everyday life and had behind it the whole "third element," that is all men and women who were actually building up the institutions of the zemstvos.

The struggle between the Government, supported by the Right Wing of the zemstvo assemblies, and the Left Wing continued throughout the reign of Alexander III and Nicholas II.

Absolutism and bureaucracy saw, in the zemstvos, revolution and the germ of a constitutional government, while the liberal workers of the zemstvos believed that the happiness of the country depended upon the expansion of the functions of local institutions. Both sides kept one another under a close observation. The zemstvo work was continually interfered with by the governors of the provinces and other representatives of the central government. It underwent many heavy trials, endured many blows, but patiently and persistently moved forward. Generations were brought up in this struggle and became champions of the rights of the people.

As time went on the central government proved more and more incapable of following the growth of the country, and the leadership of the economic life passed into the hands of the zemstvos.

The greatest achievements of the zemstvos were the result of their work in time of emergency, such as famine and war, when inability of the Government to live up to its obligations had become evident, and a supreme effort of all vital forces became necessary. The law provided that the zemstvos should be in charge of purely local affairs; they were prohibited from forming associations or unions. Their problems, however, were similar and the rational solution of these problems often required joint action as, for instance, in the case of the building of roads, prevention of epidemics, insurance, and relief to farmers in years of famine. The Government took special care that this provision should be strictly enforced, since it feared that the formation of an organization might increase the

strength of the zemstvos. But national emergencies such as war and famine created conditions which called for enthusiasm and coöperation. The strong emotions they provoked sought to translate themselves into action, and the nation refused to remain indifferent to the shortcomings of governmental organization.

When the Russo-Japanese War broke out, the zemstvos knowing the unsatisfactory conditions of the army medical service, decided to help the army by sending field hospitals and detachments to the Far East. Of course this work was outside the sphere attributed to the zemstvos by law, but patriotic feelings refused to be damped by legal technicalities. Fourteen zemstvos entered into an agreement, kept secret from the Government, to send field hospitals to the Far East, and at once began the necessary preparations. In spite of the strictest secrecy the news reached the Government which at once prohibited the organization of the hospitals on the ground that it was illegal. This decision was met with a feeling of natural indignation by the zemstvos, who in the meantime had equipped their hospitals. They succeeded in sending the field hospitals to the Far East, and the Petrograd authorities confronted with a *fait accompli* did not dare to order them back. Nevertheless, the other zemstvos were forbidden to join in the work of relief. This instance shows clearly how desperate was the struggle waged by the Government against the zemstvos and indicates that it was ready to take any risks and to make any sacrifice rather than allow the zemstvos to enlarge their sphere of influence. In this particular case the Government feared not only the strengthening of the zemstvos but also their participation in work of national importance and that criticism of official methods which would naturally result from the experience.

During the Russo-Japanese War, von Pleve, Minister of the Interior and one of the staunch supporters of the principles of absolutism—the very man who prohibited the formation of the zemstvo field hospitals—was murdered. As a concession to public opinion Prince Svyatopolk-Mirsky was appointed his successor and "one could feel the breath of the spring." The Commander-in-Chief of the army informed him of the brilliant work of the zemstvo hospitals and he issued an order permitting the other zemstvos to join the organization. However, the war proved unsuccessful and soon ended, and the zemstvo hospitals returned home.

Eventually the Government became reconciled with the idea of the

collaboration of several zemstvos for a common purpose. The Russo-Japanese War was followed by a year of famine. The zemstvos of the provinces which were suffering from bad harvests immediately formed an "Organization of the Zemstvos" for the relief of the victims of the famine. This organization was retained after the emergency and became a permanent institution. The Government not only was now reconciled to it, but even granted the zemstvos funds necessary for the carrying on of their work, thus emphasizing the fact that the old hostility had been forgotten.

The relief work of the zemstvos in famine-stricken areas is perhaps not without interest. A famine in Russia, it is only too well known, is a terrible calamity. In the agricultural provinces, which have practically no industry and where farming is the only source of making a livelihood, a poor harvest due to dry eastern winds brings untold sufferings to the population. The area affected by the famine depends, to a large extent, on the power and direction of the eastern winds. The eastern black-soil provinces of the Volga basin are particularly susceptible to their ill effects. The worst famine of the pre-war period occurred in 1891 when twenty-four provinces were affected; while poor harvests in ten to sixteen provinces were not uncommon.

A famine confronted the Government with truly stupendous problems. Under normal conditions the population was looked upon as a source of revenue for the Treasury. In years of famine, however, the Treasury had to come to the rescue of the populace. The well-being of the Treasury and of the Government was hopelessly upset and they had to face problems they could not possibly solve. The omnipotence of an autocratic government in a country as vast as Russia is illusory. No effective system of government may endure unless it has the support and collaboration of the nation. The administration endeavored to disguise its incompetence and the difficulty it was in by repeated declarations to the effect that "everything is all right." This is frequently the motto of an autocratic government; conscious of its own impotence it tried to deceive even itself, refusing to face the damaging facts. In time of famine the Government attempted to minimize the character of the calamity or even to conceal it altogether from the Tsar and public opinion in the vain hope that the population will somehow survive it.

In the days before the establishment of the zemstvos, a poor har-

vest often led to numerous deaths by starvation. The situation, however, was greatly improved after the administration of relief was taken over by the zemstvos. As soon as there were definite indications that a famine had assumed such dimensions that local resources could not check it, local zemstvos took the matter in hand, gave it wide publicity, asked the support of the Government and of the Treasury. They were invariably supported by the "Organization of the Zemstvos." Public appeals were made. Russians are very responsive to appeals for the suffering. Donations would begin to arrive at once. With the sums so assembled the Organization immediately would set up relief machinery and would then approach the Government arguing that it could not without endangering its prestige remain indifferent. Usually by the middle of the winter, sometimes as late as February or March, the Government would allow itself to be convinced, and would then make the necessary appropriations.

The psychological effect was always the same—the victory of truth over hypocrisy. Every famine undermined the prestige of the central government and strengthened the position of the zemstvos and of the democratic elements. The moral effect of relief work in the famine-stricken areas was more far reaching in the struggle with the autocracy than any political victory. One must know what famine really means, what are the psychological conditions of the people affected by it. In time of famine, real power is in the hands of those who can produce bread.

At the outbreak of the Great War the zemstvos had gained in strength and experience. Driven by a common feeling of patriotism they sent their representatives to a conference in Moscow and organized the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos for the Relief of War Sufferers. The Union was joined by forty-two provincial zemstvos, and by the Cossack territories of the Don, Kuban, and Terek. Siberia, which was still waiting for the introduction of zemstvo institutions, nevertheless kept in touch with the Union through her municipal organizations. In this way the whole of Russia, irrespective of the fact whether certain portions of it did or did not enjoy the benefit of local government, joined hands in helping the army. The direct participation of the masses in the work for the army stimulated patriotic feelings and brought home the realization of the national importance of the War.

In order to carry out the new work, special committees of the

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Union were elected by the zemstvo assemblies. They included over one thousand men prominent in every path of life. Two representatives from these committees appointed by the zemstvo assemblies and the chairman of the provincial zemstvo board who were *ex officio* members of the committee met regularly in Moscow at conferences which were the supreme organ of the Union. They discussed the program of work and made resolutions which were binding on all zemstvos. They also elected the Central Committee of the Union which carried on all the executive work. The rapid growth of the work of the Union necessitated the creation of an extensive executive machinery a description of which will be found in the following pages. Its size alone may serve as an indication of the work done by the Union.

But even now, in time of war, the old policy of obstruction was not abandoned by the Government without a struggle. It was driven, however, to realize that a war cannot be carried on without the support of the nation, and gradually capitulated to the Union. The Union was originally organized for the relief of sick and wounded soldiers, but soon overstepped the narrow limits assigned to its activities and undertook the work of supply on a national scale.

The autocratic government, separated from the people by centuries of mutual mistrust and bitterness, proved incapable of a creative work in the emergency. At the same time that the bureaucratic machinery was breaking down, the Union of Zemstvos was drawing its strength from the enthusiasm and energy of the nation itself.

The work of the Union of Zemstvos was conducted in close collaboration with that of the Union of Towns which also came into being at the outbreak of the War. The Union of Towns was an entirely new organization, since no associations of municipalities existed before the War. Soon the two Unions organized a joint committee known as the "Zemgor," for the supplying of the army with munitions and equipment.

Every day, almost every hour, brought new evidence of the weakness of the Government, and of its incompatibility with the aspirations of the country. The Imperial Government was never overthrown: it merely failed as result of its own internal weakness. The abdication of the Emperor occasioned hardly any surprise. The real revolution, in the hearts and minds of the Russian people, began

after the downfall of the monarchy, when the sufferings, humiliations, and bitterness which had been suppressed for generations gradually came to the surface.

There exists between the autocracy and the complete denial of the state, an intermediate stage when the Government acts as an organizing and directing power freely accepted by the people. Democratic tendencies are not necessarily an evil from which the Government has to protect itself, nor is the Government necessarily a negative force if it meets the requirements of a nation and organizes its creative forces.

The Russian people have repeatedly proved that they understand the nature of the relationship between the Government and the nation. They know how to accept necessary restrictions and they realize the importance of a government as an organizing power. They give proofs not only of this understanding, but also of a remarkable capacity to create this organizing element. The peasant commune, the association of workmen (*artel*), the institutions of the zemstvos and the municipal government, the work of the State Duma, and the autonomous government of the Cossacks,—all bear witness to the inborn capacity of the Russian people for self-government, of their desire for a rule by those they themselves had chosen without compulsion.

The history of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns presents merely a new illustration of the gift of the Russian people for creative effort and untiring work under most discouraging conditions. Perhaps no country in the World War had to face a task more stupendous than the one with which Russia was confronted. Not only did she have to fight an enemy who was infinitely superior to her in military equipment and general preparedness for the War, but also to bring to life a powerful war organization of which the law of the former Russian Empire took no cognizance. And this organization was created in spite of the traditional opposition of the Government and was based on forces the potentialities of which at that time were still unknown. Only natural gifts and inborn ability for organizing work on the bases of autonomy saved the situation. It was not, as the bureaucrats tried to represent the work of the Union, a sham stage-setting put up at the expense of the Treasury by a gang of revolutionaries, but a spontaneous creation of the national genius. It may verily be described as the child of the Russian people. The spirit of

the zemstvos was not something new that came to life in the sixties of the last century, as a result of the establishment of local government. Its antecedents may be traced to the very sources of Russian history, where the term "zemstvo" frequently occurs, meaning "the men of the land," those men who always were a creative element in the life of the state. They were traditionally opposed to the members of the central administration, as men who lived on the land and were its real masters.

The Russian people, as a whole, know their own strength and have faith in it. Perhaps they even have too much faith, as happens to those who are sure of their power, and they therefore quietly and even humorously accept the threats and blows of fate. They will endure anything because of their strength, but not because they are slaves. They will never break down, and in the midst of the chaos of destruction will lay the foundation of the temple of their new faith. They are willing to accept limitations and restrictions in the name of order and public good, but they will never be a slave of the Government. They have too much moral strength to accept slavery.

The gentleness and inertness of the Russian character coupled with an inborn reserve offered frequent temptations to the Government to abuse its power, but this invariably ended in rebellion when the Russian kindliness gave place to uncontrollable violence, rebellions for which Russia had often to pay by years of suffering. But they always emerged from the ordeal regenerated and stronger than before.

The zemstvos existed for only thirty-three years. Their history has never been sufficiently studied not only because of the atmosphere of suspicion created round it by the Government, but also because of the rapidity of their own growth. But a mere outline of their achievements in the field of economic life and their place among the institutions of the country point to the foundations on which they were built and the sources from which were derived their great accomplishments. They are the moral forces of a nation and its capacity for self-government.

In opposition to the traditional view that was accepted as religious dogma, that the Russian State could be built only by autocratic methods, that autocracy is an inalienable attribute of the Russian State and has its roots in the conscience of the Russian people, the history of the zemstvos shows that Russia has tremen-

dous abilities for self-government and is capable of building a powerful organization along broad and democratic lines. The moral forces of the Russian people seek admittance to take part in the building of the state, they await their free expansion.

The history of the zemstvos gives firm ground for the belief that the Russian people will overcome all obstacles which have been forced upon them from the outside and from the inside and against which they are still struggling. They will free themselves from all fetters and will join the family of the nations of the world as a great organizing power stronger than they have ever been before, and free in the exercise of their creative national genius.

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND ORGANIZATION OF ZEMSTVO INSTITUTIONS[1]

Local Government before the Reform of 1864.

"The best judges of the most convenient method of performing communal duties are the inhabitants themselves, because they know best what one may do either with money, or in person, with one's own hands or horse, and where it can be done."

In this rather naïve form, Nicholas I, in one of his orders issued while serfdom was still in force (1851), gave expression to the idea that there was need of local self-government. But it was, of course, impossible to expect that genuine self-government could be introduced in Russia as long as the conditions of serfdom were in existence. No doubt, as far back as the beginning of the nineteenth century the local budgets were made independent of the national budget, and under the laws of 1851 delegates representing the nobility and the towns had seats, together with the higher officials of the provincial administration, in the "Provincial Committees on Communal Duties," which were presided over by the governors of the respective provinces. At best, however, we can regard these bureaucratic class institutions as feeble beginnings of local government.

These committees drew up the local budgets and assessed taxes and personal service duties (*corvée*) for three years in advance. The Government, however, hesitated to grant complete autonomy in the task of making up the local budgets even to these preponderantly bureaucratic institutions, and it required that the budgets, after being drawn up locally, should be submitted through the Ministry of

[1] The zemstvos were institutions of local government outside the urban areas. The term zemstvo is derived from the Russian word *zemlya,* land, and is traditionally associated with organizations of social groups connected with land, the landed gentry, and the farmers. A discussion of the municipal government by N. J. Astrov will be found in the volume *The War and the Russian Government* (Yale University Press, 1929) in this series of the *Economic and Social History of the World War.*

Finance to the State Council and receive the final sanction of the Emperor.

Although the competence of these committees differed but little from that of the zemstvos to be established later, local life remained for many years in the same stagnant condition. Hospitals, with rare exceptions, were to be found only in the chief cities of the province, but even these were kept in such a state that the population showed the utmost reluctance to undergo hospital treatment. Roads, which used to be mended exclusively by *corvée* labor, would become absolutely impassable during the spring and autumn rains, and as far as agronomic assistance to the peasantry was concerned, there was not even a trace of it anywhere. As for education, which, incidentally, was not within the competence of the local organs, it was practically non-existent. Here and there, in the settlements of the crown peasants, a governmental primary school might be found; but the education of the serfs was left wholly to the discretion of their masters, and only a few of these opened schools at their own expense.

The Reform of 1864.

Such had been the state of local life previous to the zemstvo reform of 1864. This was merely a link in the chain of the Great Reforms inaugurated by Alexander II in the first years of his reign, and all of these reforms were founded upon the Act of February 19, 1861,[2] by which the serfs were emancipated.

The freed serf was now a citizen among citizens and was therefore entitled to his share in local government. It was not by a mere coincidence that only three days after the Emancipation Manifesto had been signed a commission was formed at St. Petersburg to work out the principles of a new rural government organization. But it must be borne in mind that the zemstvo government was not established under a constitutional and democratic *régime*, but under an absolute monarchy, upon a basis of bureaucratic class rule. This is why the zemstvo reform of 1864, although it was an immense advance on the path of democracy, had all the marks of a compromise between the traditional views on government and the new ideas.

The zemstvos were introduced in only thirty-four of the central

[2] All dates in this monograph are given in accordance with the Russian calendar.

provinces of the Empire. None were established in Siberia, Turkestan, the Caucasus, Trans-Caucasia, Poland, the Baltic provinces, and the Cossack territories. Nine provinces in the west and northwest, where many of the big landlords were Poles, were also denied zemstvo government. But even where the zemstvos were established they were considered "not as links in the machinery of government, nor as authoritative organs of public law, but as private corporate associations formed in order to satisfy such local interests as are distinct from the interests of the State."[3]

This way of regarding the zemstvos as mere civil law corporations competent to concern themselves only "with local benefits and needs," as the law put it, persisted in government circles till the revolution of 1905, serving as a source of incessant recriminations and conflicts between zemstvo and government. This was inevitable because the activity of the zemstvos, even though carried on within the limits of their own particular districts or provinces, was essentially of nation-wide importance and rested upon principles far exceeding the narrow confines of the "local benefits and needs" deliberately imposed by the Government.

The competence of the zemstvo institutions was wide from the outset, nevertheless. The law of 1864 left to the zemstvos the charge of public education, health, welfare, agricultural development, stock-breeding, trade, industry, construction and upkeep of roads, bridges, and harbors, fire insurance and measures of fire prevention, food supply, local postal service, and similar matters. In short, there was hardly a branch of local activity that was left outside the competence of the zemstvo.

In addition to the care for local needs, the zemstvos were entrusted with a number of duties and obligations of an official nature. Thus, they were required to maintain jails, pay the expenses of traveling police authorities and judiciary officials, and assume other similar responsibilities. In case of war the zemstvos were obliged to assist the families of men called to the colors from the reserve, in accordance with regulations provided by law. The zemstvos were empowered, moreover, to issue certain ordinances of a police character, and, upon confirmation by the government administration, these ordinances acquired all the force of laws.

[3] Kisevetter, *Mestnoe Samoupravlenie* (*Local Government*), Moscow, 1910.

However, this very wide sphere left to the competence of the zemstvo institutions was in practice hedged in by the narrow limits of their authority in the most essential fields. Thus, in the educational domain, the zemstvo was to attend only to the economic needs of the schools (construction and maintenance of buildings, supply of books and other necessaries, payment of teachers' salaries, etc.). It was denied the right to alter the curricula in its own schools, nor was it permitted to appoint or dismiss the teachers, and whenever it wished to open a new school it had to obtain special permission from the central authorities.

Provincial and District Zemstvos.

In conformity with the administrative division of the Empire into provinces and districts, the zemstvos were likewise classified as provincial and district zemstvos. But the sphere of the two different institutions was not sharply separated by law; they were free to divide their work among themselves as might seem best to them as the result of practical experience. There were provinces where the provincial zemstvos at once took a leading part, and there were others where the district zemstvos for a long time stubbornly defended their absolute independence. In course of time, however, their respective fields were delimited, along certain broad lines, more or less uniformly in all zemstvo provinces.

The provincial zemstvos took charge, to begin with, of such institutions and activities as by their very nature were capable of functioning only in the more important centers of population, or whose maintenance and support would prove beyond the capacities of the district zemstvos. Among these were hospitals for the treatment of mental and other special diseases, homes for abandoned children, laboratories for the manufacture of serums for the prevention of infectious diseases and animal plagues, insurance organizations, and similar institutions. The provincial zemstvos also maintained regular staffs of experts to offer practical guidance in the work of the district zemstvos. There were also sanitary and veterinary organizations, agronomical staffs, organs charged with the construction and proper upkeep of roads, workshops for school equipment, exhibitions of the products of cottage industries and various other things, etc. Lastly, and mainly under the jurisdiction of the provincial zemstvos, there were certain institutions of a semi-

commercial character, requiring the employment of a large amount of working capital; among these may be mentioned warehouses for iron and steel products and fireproof building materials, stores for agricultural machinery and implements, bookstores, and other such enterprises.

The district zemstvos were engaged principally in the work of directly managing and supervising the schools, libraries, hospitals, and roads, and organizing agronomic and veterinary services.

The general guidance of zemstvo activities and the preparation of the annual budgets was in the hands of the zemstvo assemblies. These were collegiate bodies composed of delegates, or deputies, elected by the population. The latter chose the delegates to the district zemstvo assemblies, and these, in turn, would elect among their own members the delegates to the provincial zemstvo assemblies. These were presided over by the marshals of the local nobility elected by the members of their own corporation. An arrangement of this kind was necessary as some concession to the class principle prevailing in the social organization of the Russian Empire previous to the era of the Great Reforms. The assemblies then chose, on the collegiate principle, their executive organs, known as the zemstvo boards, but the appointment of the presiding officers of these boards, after they had been elected to office, required the approval of the Government.

Delegates to the several zemstvo organs were elected on a basis of property qualification, on the "curial" system. The first *curia* was composed of private individuals possessing real estate outside the cities; the second, of those owning real estate within the city limits; and the third was represented by the peasant communes. The number of delegates to be chosen by each *curia* in each district was prescribed in a special schedule appended to the law.

Since the landowners who did not belong to the peasant communes, immediately after the abolition of serfdom, were almost exclusively members of the nobility, it was inevitable that the curial election system should impart more or less of a class character to the zemstvos. This happened in spite of the fact that the zemstvo was in principle an institution embracing all classes of the population. The first *curia* represented the nobility; the second, the urban bourgeoisie; and the third, the peasantry. But since, in most of the

district zemstvo assemblies, the largest number of seats was held by the deputies of the first *curia*, it was only natural that the dominant influence in the institutions of the zemstvos should be in the hands of the local nobles.

The budgets of the zemstvos were built largely on the principle of self-assessment. The chief source of zemstvo revenues was furnished by taxation of real estate (mainly land and forests). The rates of this taxation were not fixed by law, but were prescribed afresh by the zemstvo assemblies every year, in accordance with the expenditure contemplated. Compared with this basic source of revenue, others, derived from a special addition to the government taxes on commerce and industry, from real estate and capital owned by the zemstvos, and from other such sources, were only negligible quantities in most of the zemstvos. Consequently, every increase of the zemstvo budget resulted in an automatic increase of taxes on the land.

Within the limits of the jurisdiction granted them by law the zemstvos were absolutely independent. All that the representatives of the central government—the provincial governors—were supposed to do was to watch that the decisions adopted by the zemstvo assemblies should not violate any law. If they found them to be contrary to law, the governors could prevent the execution of such decisions. The disputes that arose in this connection were settled by the Senate (the supreme court of the Empire), whose verdict was final.

Such, in broad outline, was the organization of the zemstvo under the law of 1864. "Questions concerning the essence and jurisdiction of the zemstvo institutions, of the composition of the zemstvo membership, and of relations between zemstvo and the organs of the Crown," says Professor Kisevetter,[4] "were ultimately settled in a spirit of compromise between the new principles and the legacies of a past that had obviously lost all reason to exist after the Emancipation Act of February 19, 1861."

Nature of the Work of the Zemstvos.

The newly established zemstvo institutions attracted keen public attention and interest from the outset. The most progressive and educated members of the landlord class took a very prominent part

[4] Kisevetter, *op. cit.*

in the work of the zemstvos, and the intellectual element which could not rest satisfied with the dead routine work of the bureaucratic government services also began to flock to the institutions of local government. We may say without hesitation that there was no other institution in Russia that attracted such large numbers of unselfish, devoted workers as did the zemstvos.

The results were not slow in manifesting themselves. First of all, the zemstvos turned their attention to problems of education and health. Rural Russia, mostly illiterate and hitherto lacking all provision for medical attendance, was now being covered rapidly with a network of schools, hospitals, and dispensaries. Of course, the zemstvo institutions were not everywhere and constantly displaying full capacities. Much depended upon the composition of the zemstvo assemblies. Sometimes one would come across conservative district zemstvos side by side with others that were progressive and active; but, broadly speaking, those provinces that had zemstvos soon outdistanced in cultural progress the non-zemstvo provinces that remained under the rule of the bureaucracy. The following figures relating to medical conditions[5] are illuminating: in 1895, there was one hospital bed per 6,500 population in the thirty-four zemstvo provinces, as against one bed per 41,000 in the fourteen non-zemstvo provinces of European Russia. The per capita disbursement for medical services in the thirty-four zemstvo provinces was 34 copecks in 1892 and 56 copecks in 1904, while in the fourteen non-zemstvo provinces the disbursement for the respective years was 17 and 22 copecks.

It appears from these figures that the difference between the medical service in provinces enjoying and not enjoying local government, which had been very marked even during the first quarter of a century of zemstvo work, was growing even greater as time went on.

Similar results became apparent in the educational field. According to a census of rural schools in 1911, there were then 46 pupils for every thousand rural population of both sexes in the thirty-four zemstvo provinces, as against 34 pupils in other parts of European Russia and 18 only in Asiatic Russia.

[5] V. Veselovsky, *Istorya Zemstv* (*History of Local Government*), Vols. I-IV, St. Petersburg, 1905-1909.

The path of the zemstvos was difficult. First and foremost among the many obstacles they had to contend with were the inertia and indifference of the people themselves. These looked askance upon the enterprises started by the zemstvos. Unable as yet to realize the need of education, they refused to let their children go to school; in case of sickness they continued to appeal to quacks and charlatans for help; and, adhering to traditional agricultural policy, they had only ridicule and distrust for the expert advice of trained agronomists placed at their service. More than two decades of persistent and untiring effort were required before the people became at last impressed with the advantages of education and progress.

During this period of pioneering activity the zemstvos were able to elaborate certain definite principles and methods for their further work. Among these, we mention the two following, which were adopted by all zemstvos, although not always consistently adhered to: (1) the substitution of a money tax for the services in kind which had survived from the period of serfdom (*corvée* labor), and (2) the institution of gratuitous service to the population, and, above all, of free elementary education and medical relief.

In their constructive activities, the progressive workers of the zemstvos found themselves compelled to wage incessant struggle within the zemstvo assemblies. Here, there were at first a considerable proportion of reactionary deputies who were determined to oppose the effort to educate the mass of the people and who looked with disapproval on cultural enterprises of any kind. This element was composed largely of the older landlords who had owned serfs before the emancipation, who favored the former order of things and would have liked to see serfdom restored. Death and replacement by younger men, however, were taking their natural toll of these deputies as time went on, gradually changing the character of the assemblies; but as late as the nineties it was still possible to meet, side by side with zemstvos that had managed to introduce almost universal education (certain districts in the provinces of Vyatka and Tver, the district of Berdyansk in the province of Taurida, and others), others that had contrived, in the thirty long years of their existence, to open not more than half a dozen elementary schools (this was the case, for instance, in some of the districts in the province of Pskov).

The Zemstvos and the Central Government.

But neither the inertia of the population nor the reactionary attitude of certain elements within the zemstvos placed as many obstacles in their way as did the Government and its local representatives, the provincial governors. Friction between the Government and the zemstvos developed as soon as the latter set to work.

The trouble was that free self-governing institutions possessing absolute autonomy within the limits of the law were utterly at variance with those principles of autocracy to which the Russian bureaucracy had been so long accustomed. The natural result was that neither the local authorities nor the central government could refrain from constantly interfering in the affairs of the zemstvos. The latter were thus forced into opposition to the Government by having to defend their independence against its encroachments. As early as 1867 this had been the cause of a serious clash between the Government and the provincial zemstvo of St. Petersburg, ending in the suspension of this zemstvo from all its functions by command of the Emperor for the space of six months, and the banishment of some of its deputies from the capital by order of the Government.

Minor conflicts between zemstvos and local administration officials were of constant occurrence. Provincial governors availed themselves extensively of their authority to stop the execution of what to them seemed to be unlawful decisions of the zemstvo assemblies. Even though the Senate would frequently overrule the governors, its decisions often came only after the lapse of two or three years, by which time the matters in dispute had lost all vital importance.

Especially numerous were the obstacles interposed by the Government in the educational endeavors of the zemstvos. The Ministry of Education kept a vigilant watch that the public schools taught nothing but prescribed curricula. But, in spite of their being forbidden to interfere with the purely educational side of their own school system, the zemstvos persisted in their efforts to influence it, and often hired instructors at their own expense. In 1872, however, the Ministry of Education issued an ordinance declaring this activity contrary to the letter of the law. A similar failure attended the efforts of the zemstvos to organize special colleges for the training of elementary school teachers. Some of the zemstvos managed to

open such colleges, but toward the close of the seventies the Government intervened, and these efforts were systematically defeated by the provincial governors.

Anxious to foster education and raise the general cultural level, the zemstvos took the initiative in organizing educational facilities outside the schools, by arranging public lectures, opening libraries, etc., and here, again, the Government put difficulties in their way, by hostile orders, amendments, and interpretations of the law.

Being thus forced into constant opposition to the central government in the defense of the right of local government, the zemstvo workers became gradually convinced of the hopelessness of the contest so long as autocracy prevailed in Russia. When the Government, toward the close of the reign of Alexander II, appealed for public support in its fight against the increasing terrorism of the revolutionaries, several of the provincial zemstvos (Tver, Kharkov, Chernigov, and a few others) addressed a declaration to the Tsar pledging their support, but at the same time calling his attention, in cautious language, to the need of fundamental political reforms and the summoning of a representative national assembly. Similar memorials were presented by certain zemstvos to Alexander III, but the only result was increased repression, and prison and exile for some of the leading zemstvo workers.

The reactionary policy of Alexander III naturally manifested itself also in the attitude of the authorities toward the theory of local government in general and the institution of the zemstvos in particular, and their work was increasingly hampered. A law passed on August 19, 1879, obliged the zemstvo boards to submit to the provincial governor for confirmation, the name of every employee to be taken into their service, while it authorized the governors to remove zemstvo workers whom they might think "politically undesirable." As this was a very elastic term, susceptible of a wide interpretation, the law thus gave into the hands of the local officials a powerful and dangerous weapon for combating the zemstvos. In the reign of Alexander III refusals by the governors of confirmation of appointments and dismissals of expert workers in the service of the then greatly expanded zemstvo organization was of everyday occurrence. The inevitable result was that the normal development of local government was seriously impeded.

Locally, this conflict between zemstvo representatives and the gov-

ernment authorities became more acute as the years went by. In an atmosphere of profound reaction, in which all public initiative was suppressed and the press was muzzled by the censorship, it was quite natural that the zemstvo assemblies, where a voice of protest, however feeble, might still be heard, should develop into organs of opposition. The meetings of the provincial zemstvo assemblies used to draw large audiences eager to hear free speech, and they would enthusiastically applaud the more popular among the liberal orators. Thus the conflict of self-government and autocracy was made more and more apparent, and in the meanwhile the reactionary press, to whose influence Alexander III himself was subject, clamored for stern measures against the revolutionary peril lurking in the zemstvos.

The Zemstvo Act of 1890.

In spite of all this, the zemstvos had managed, during the twenty-five years that they had then been in existence, to organize such far-reaching undertakings, and to make themselves so indispensable a part of the general fabric of the nation, that it was absurd to even think of replacing them by the old bureaucratic machinery. The attempt was therefore made to subject the zemstvos, by partial reforms, more directly to the control of the authorities and, at the same time, to alter the composition of the assemblies by the introduction of reactionary elements. With this object in view, the zemstvo law was revised at the close of the eighties, and on June 12, 1890, the Tsar ratified new enactments effecting vital changes in the structure of these organizations.

To begin with, the electoral laws were radically altered. The nobility were made into a separate *curia,* and the deputies elected by this *curia* obtained in nearly every zemstvo assembly a majority of seats; and this in spite of the fact that the land holdings of the gentry had already by that time dwindled considerably. On the other hand, the number of peasant representatives was greatly reduced. The peasants lost, moreover, the right to choose directly their own representatives to the zemstvo assemblies; instead, they were merely empowered to elect candidates for that office, and from among these the local officials would make such appointments to the assemblies as they thought best. The following table affords an idea

of the change made by the law of 1890 in the relationship between landed property qualifications and zemstvo representation:

Area of Land per Member of District Zemstvos.

	1877		*1905*	
	Curia *of large owners*	Curia *of peasants*	Curia *of nobility*	Curia *of peasants*
In the thirty-four zemstvo provinces	9,200	16,200	4,700	30,400
Including:				
Moscow	5,300	9,300	2,100	14,700
Samara	17,700	36,400	7,600	100,200

From an institution representing all classes of the population, the zemstvo was thus transformed into a body representing the nobility. The law of 1890 abridged the rights of the zemstvos considerably, and the Government was enabled more than ever to meddle in their affairs. We note here the following two innovations which exerted an especially harmful influence upon the further activities of the zemstvo institutions: (1) The provincial governors and the Minister of the Interior were now authorized not only to refuse their approval to undesirable presiding officers and members of executive organs elected by the zemstvos, thus preventing them from assuming office, but to appoint their own nominees to such posts, after having twice refused to confirm those proposed in their offices; (2) governors were authorized to prohibit the execution of resolutions of zemstvo assemblies, not only if they failed to conform to the law, but likewise when they did "not harmonize with the general interests and needs of the state, or clearly violated the interests of the local population." These two provisions of the new law made the zemstvos in a very large measure dependent upon the arbitrary will of the officials of the central administration.

And yet the changes in the law failed to justify the hopes of the Government. The composition of the assemblies changed but little, while the increasing intervention of the government authorities in the affairs of the zemstvos merely tended to accentuate their hostility to the Government.

Upon the accession of Nicholas II, nine provincial zemstvo assemblies presented to the Emperor an address in which they expressed, among other things, a desire that he should govern the

country with the advice and counsel of popular representatives. But the young monarch, addressing the deputies at their reception, told them that these wishes were only "senseless dreams."

Controversy over Taxation on Schools.

The zemstvo reform of 1890 affected the educational activities of these institutions just as little as it changed their political aspirations. In spite of its antiquated political organization, the Russian Empire made rapid strides along the path of cultural and economic progress, the wants of the population correspondingly increased, and the zemstvos could not but endeavor to satisfy these wants in spite of the growing hostility and opposition of the central power. It was the very period that followed the reactionary reforms of 1890 which witnessed an unprecedented expansion of zemstvo activities. This was seen, above all, in the budgets of the zemstvos. The following figures show the expansion of zemstvo budgets during the period of 1875-1905:[6]

	Expenditure in thirty-four zemstvo provinces		*Average annual growth of expenditure*	
	1875	*1905*	*1875-1890*	*1890-1905*
	(in thousands of rubles)			
Total expenditure	28,870	124,185	2,190	4,035
Including:				
Education	3,550	25,314	245	1,206
Public health	4,180	35,856	449	1,663
Economic and agronomic measures	48	3,606	...	...
Veterinary aid	121	2,980	57	133

The growing zemstvo budgets, involving heavier land taxation, caused alarm in some very influential circles among the landed proprietors. A campaign was launched in the columns of the reactionary press against the "levity" with which the zemstvos were said to be spending the hard-earned money of the population. The result was that, on June 12, 1900, a law was passed which fixed definite rates of taxation. The zemstvos were now prohibited from raising their assessments by more than 3 per cent per annum (on the average for several years) and the Minister of the Interior was author-

[6] *Kalendar Zemskago Deyately* (*Zemstvo Yearbook*) for 1917.

ized to veto zemstvo appropriations that were in excess of the limits prescribed for their budgets.

But the demands of practical life proved stronger than all written laws. The desirability of the zemstvo appropriations was so obvious that it was found impossible to confine the budgets to the narrow limits allowed under the new law. And thus the budgets, in spite of all attempts to pare them, continued to increase after 1900 in practically the same proportion as before: during the five years before 1900, the budgets of all the zemstvos had increased by 40 per cent, and during the following five-year period the rate of increase was 39 per cent.

But while the new law failed to attain its immediate object, it gave the authorities an additional weapon against the zemstvos. This weapon was utilized by the Government at the end of the nineties, in its struggle with the zemstvos over the school question. This arose out of the attempt of the Government to substitute parish schools for the secular primary schools maintained by the zemstvos. In the end the zemstvos were victorious, for, notwithstanding very substantial appropriations by the Holy Synod, the parish schools did not prosper and were unable to compete with the schools of the zemstvos. So manifest was the superiority of the latter that the peasants themselves began to clamor for zemstvo rather than parish schools, and the Government was obliged to yield.

Need of a Reform.

As the work of the zemstvos developed and expanded, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the need of a comprehensive zemstvo reform made itself increasingly felt. The area of land held by the nobility continued to shrink rapidly, and the number of landowners of this class had in many districts dwindled so far that a deputy elected to the zemstvos by the nobles sometimes represented only two or three voters. In some places the voters of this class who attended the zemstvo assemblies were even fewer than the deputies whom they were entitled to choose, and those present then simply elected themselves deputies. In these circumstances it was only natural that the control in a number of zemstvos should finally be concentrated in the hands of two or three aristocratic families, upon whose will now depended very largely the zemstvo activity of entire districts. Of course, such a state of affairs was bound to undermine

the very basis of local government, destroying the bonds that were supposed to connect it with the great mass of the people. Vital considerations therefore seemed to demand a radical reform of the zemstvo franchise on non-class principles. Moreover, the problem had arisen of changing the entire structure of the zemstvos themselves so as to keep pace with their expanding functions.

According to the zemstvo statutes, the district zemstvo was the lowest unit of local government. There were also, no doubt, smaller administrative units, volost[7] and village community, representing the organizations of the peasant class, but these were subordinated directly to the control of the local officers of the central government in matters of administration and police jurisdiction. Already at the time of the emancipation of the serfs the question had been raised of forming a lower unit of local government, in the shape of a volost organization embracing all classes. And during the closing years of the nineteenth century the question of establishing a volost zemstvo was again broached. This time it was no longer a theoretical discussion, but a very vital necessity, in view of the increasing complexity of zemstvo activities and the need of enlisting the coöperation of large sections of the population that had not shared in this work heretofore. Yet the demands of the zemstvos were not heeded.

On the other hand, the elaborate character of the work carried on by the zemstvos urgently required a certain amount of coördination and unification. But there, again, there were difficulties in the way; for a law had been in existence since 1867 prohibiting zemstvos of different provinces from communicating with each other "concerning matters pertaining to the competence of the central government or concerning questions which, under the law, are subject to the jurisdiction of government departments." The problem of establishing an organization combining all the zemstvos had been discussed intermittently at the zemstvo assemblies for years, but, just as in the case of the volost zemstvos, it could not be solved in face of the stubborn opposition of the Government. The only concessions obtained prior to the Japanese War were the following: (1) In 1899 it permitted several provincial zemstvos to combine to establish in the city of Orel an organization for the collective purchase of farming implements and machinery; and (2) in 1904 it authorized the pro-

[7] *Volost*—a small administrative unit comprising several village communities.

vincial zemstvos to form an association, or union, for the reinsurance of the heavy fire risks assumed by the zemstvo insurance departments.

Association of Zemstvos.

Partial concessions, however, of this nature could not satisfy the zemstvo leaders, who were convinced of the urgent need of an all-inclusive, permanent zemstvo association that would serve to regulate and coördinate their activities on a nationwide basis. As a substitute for such an organization the presidents of the provincial zemstvo boards commenced as early as 1895, upon the initiative of D. N. Shipov, chairman of the Moscow provincial zemstvo board, to hold private conferences, at which the various problems of zemstvo administration were carefully discussed. In 1904, at the outbreak of the Japanese War, there was formed, on the initiative of one of these conferences, but without any sanction from the Government, a "General Zemstvo Organization for the Relief of Sick and Wounded Soldiers." The authorities were thus confronted with an accomplished fact, and since the aims of this body were of such a nature that it would have been dangerous to dissolve it, the Government could not do more than try to hamper its work.

Under a special law passed in 1900, the organization of food supply, until then in the hands of the zemstvos, was taken from their control. It should be frankly admitted, however, that this work had not been efficiently managed by the zemstvos. This was due, first, to the fact that the organization was built upon the antiquated food statutes of 1834 and, second, to the fact that, being unable to obtain concerted action, the several zemstvos were forced to make their purchases in a haphazard, uncoördinated fashion, competing in the market one with another and thus contributing to the inflation of grain prices. But after the food supply had been taken over by the Government its management became still worse, and this is why, in 1905, when there was a famine in some of the fertile black-earth provinces, the Government not only refrained from interference, but even went so far as to place for two years in succession considerable funds at the disposal of the unauthorized organization of the zemstvos for the relief of the victims of the famine. However, we must remember that times were then changing, for in the same year the revolution swept Russia from end to end.

In 1908, a zemstvo congress adopted statutes for an association of all zemstvos, for the purpose of combating by common efforts future public calamities. But this organization was joined by only eighteen of the thirty-four provincial zemstvos.

Political Activities.

Parallel with the formation of associations of provincial zemstvos for cultural and economic purposes, the political currents that had become more pronounced among the zemstvos at the beginning of the nineteenth century were also beginning to seek some common channel. In 1903 there was formed a secret organization known as the "Zemstvo Constitutionalists," which the most prominent zemstvo workers gradually joined. Their congresses undertook to direct the political actions of their members in the assemblies and conferences of the zemstvos, which were beginning to meet quite openly, without any government permission, at the close of 1904, taking prompt advantage of the confusion prevailing in the domestic policy, as a result of the defeats suffered in the Far East. The Constitutionalists were able to secure the adoption, in most of the provincial zemstvo assemblies, of resolutions favoring an appeal to the Emperor in which he should be emphatically urged to abandon autocracy for constitutional government. An appeal of this nature was finally voted by the first All-Russian congress of zemstvos, which met at St. Petersburg on November 6, 1904. At the end of May, 1905, Nicholas II received a deputation from the third zemstvo congress, headed by Prince S. N. Trubetskoy, and listened to their outline of a program of constitutional reforms.

It will thus be seen that the political activities of the zemstvos played a prominent part in the revolution of 1905, which ended in the promulgation of the Manifesto of October 17, 1905, and the convocation of the State Duma.

Effects of the Revolution of 1905.

It would be an error, however, to suppose that these political struggles made the zemstvos neglectful of their fundamental tasks. Veselovsky, the historian of the Russian zemstvos,[8] shows that it was precisely the five years from 1900 to 1905 which proved the most

[8] V. Veselovsky, *op. cit.*, Vol. III.

productive in their career. Their educational work, in particular, made great progress. The number of zemstvo schools largely increased (by 34 per cent from 1903 to 1909), plans were pushed forward to assure a network of schools adequate to provide universal education, and public libraries and reading rooms were opened in rapid succession. Agronomic and health measures were introduced on an increasingly large scale. "At this time," says Veselovsky, "the provincial zemstvos began also to render systematic assistance to the district zemstvos in the construction of school buildings, agronomic aid, anti-epidemic measures, etc. Collegiate bodies were being organized, with the active participation of those practically engaged in these fields (school commissions, economic and medical councils, and so on), and there were now more frequent conventions of the presiding officers of district zemstvo boards and of experts."

The revolution of 1905 radically changed the composition of the majority of the zemstvo assemblies. Agrarian riots, accompanied by the burning and looting of the landlords' estates in the black-soil sections (in the south and along the Volga), necessarily aroused a reactionary sentiment in the zemstvos, then largely composed of representatives of the landed gentry. At the first zemstvo election to be held after the events of 1905, the liberals, till then the leading group in the zemstvos, suffered a crushing defeat, and most of the zemstvos came under the control of moderately conservative and sometimes reactionary elements. But even so, after forty years of local government, the very conservatism of these new members was of a different complexion. By this time the older generation, former serf-owners, had passed away, and even the reactionary elements had advanced. It is true that in some provinces, for instance Kursk, the new representatives in the zemstvos made attempts to abolish a number of educational and philanthropic institutions left by their predecessors, but on the whole it may be stated that the work of the zemstvos continued to develop at about the same rate as before. For in the twentieth century even an extreme reactionary would hardly dare suggest that there was harm in education, agronomy, medicine, and other such things, as reactionaries of the older generation had done. Today, looking back at the past, we may even say that among the conservative zemstvo leaders of the last decade there were just as many enlightened and devoted men as among the liberals of an earlier period.

The attitude of the Government toward the zemstvo likewise changed after the revolution of 1905. This was due, on the one hand, to the fact that the political disposition of the zemstvos themselves was now more to the taste of the Government, and on the other, to the fact that there was now a Duma. As the Duma had become the national arena of the political struggle, the political action of the zemstvo assemblies lost all importance and came to a standstill.[9] Besides, in the four decades of their existence, the zemstvos had won so conspicuous a place in the organization of the empire and had become so closely knit with the administration of the whole country that it would have been idle to think of restricting or abolishing them. Thus it came about that, after the revolution of 1905, at the same time that a constitutional *régime* was made the basis of the Russian Empire, the zemstvos won the unconditional and definite recognition of the Government.

The Zemstvos after 1905.

During the interval between the revolution of 1905 and 1917 the zemstvos developed vigorously in many different branches of economic and cultural life. This, as above indicated, was now facilitated by the better relations established with the Government and by the special attention that was paid to their needs by the Duma. It is true, up to the World War the conservative majorities of the Third and Fourth Dumas were not eager to promote any radical reform of the rather obsolete basic principles of zemstvo administration;[10] but they were nevertheless in favor of the principle of local government and persuaded the Government to extend financial support to existing zemstvos and to establish new ones in provinces where none as yet existed.

The financial subsidies from the Government took the form of very liberal appropriations for agronomic assistance to the peasantry and of special funds for the rural and urban local government bodies, to enable them to provide enough schools for an ultimately

[9] Only in 1916 did the zemstvos again commence political action, being driven to this by the entirely abnormal political situation that arose during the War.

[10] The first two Dumas intended to introduce radical zemstvo reforms, to be based on universal suffrage. This plan was frustrated by their dissolution.

universal education. For these purposes, the law of 1908 placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Education a special annual credit of more than 50,000,000 rubles. At first, all this money was not utilized, but by the time the War broke out, almost the whole of it was being spent. The rapid rise in government subsidies to zemstvos appears clearly from the following figures of their budgets in the thirty-four provinces: from 11,918,000 rubles in 1910 they increased to 57,991,000 rubles in 1914; during the same period the revenue of the zemstvos increased from 171,688,000 rubles to 292,050,000 rubles.[11] It will be seen that during the four years preceding the War, the government subsidies to zemstvos increased fivefold: forming only about 7 per cent of the total revenue in 1910, they amounted to 20 per cent in 1914.

During the decade immediately preceding the War, the Government at last agreed to extend the zemstvo institution to those provinces and territories where it had hitherto so stubbornly opposed its establishment. In 1911 the Government carried through the legislature a law sanctioning the introduction of institutions of local government in six western provinces (Kiev, Volhynia, Podolia, Vitebsk, Minsk, and Mogilev)[12] and in 1912 a law was passed to extend it to three other provinces (Astrakhan, Orenburg, Stavropol). Plans were under consideration for the introduction of local government in the Don territory, Siberia, etc.

An important feature of these new laws was the absence of the class principle of representation that had formed part of the Zemstvo Act of 1890. The Government thus returned to something like the principles adopted by it at the outset in 1864. In the Zemstvo Acts of 1911 and 1912 we have no longer a special *curia* for the gentry; instead we find, side by side with the peasant *curia*, a *curia* embracing landowners of all classes. Another interesting feature of the zemstvo institution established in the six western provinces was the material reduction of the franchise qualifications, and the division of the landowners' *curia* into Russian and non-Russian, the for-

[11] *Zemstvo Yearbook* for 1912 and 1916.

[12] As early as 1903, zemstvo institutions on peculiar principles had been introduced there: the members of the assemblies and boards were appointed by the Government from among those who had the requisite property qualifications. Of course, such an institution could not be regarded as a real organ of self-government.

mer being allowed a larger representation in the assemblies. Both these provisions were adopted in order to keep these zemstvos free from Polish control, as many of the great landowners in those localities were Poles. This relatively democratic structure of the zemstvos in the western provinces was not easily carried through the reactionary upper house (State Council) by the sponsor of the law, the Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, M. Stolypin.

Thus there were already forty-three provinces in European Russia possessing zemstvo institutions when the War began.

CHAPTER II

ACTIVITIES OF THE ZEMSTVO INSTITUTIONS ON THE EVE OF THE WAR

Revenue and Expenditure.

In 1913 the territory in which the zemstvo institutions functioned covered an area of 3,200,000 square versts,[1] with a population of 112,500,000, of whom 98,200,000 were rural. The whole of European and Asiatic Russia, excluding Finland, had an area of 18,800,000 square versts, with a population of 170,900,000.

The budget of all the provincial and district zemstvos in the forty-three provinces possessing these institutions amounted to 347,512,000 rubles in 1914. The zemstvo revenues were derived from the following sources:[2]

Revenue in 1914.

	In rubles	*Percentage*
Taxation:		
Land and forests	142,543,000	42.4
Urban real estate	21,353,000	6.4
Factories and other property outside cities	36,224,000	10.8
Total revenues from real estate	200,120,000	59.6
Government subventions	67,487,000	20.1
Other revenues	68,766,000	20.3
Grand Total	336,373,000	100.0

We have already had occasion to point out how rapidly the financial support of the zemstvos by the Government increased after the revolution of 1905. Quite insignificant as late as 1908, the government subsidies in 1914 already amounted to one-fifth of all the revenues. Still, the principal source of revenue remained the same as it had been at the time the zemstvos were established; that is, taxation of land and forests (42.4 per cent).

[1] One square mile = 2.7 square versts.

[2] These figures cover forty out of the forty-three zemstvo provinces.

The expenditure of all provincial and district zemstvos for 1914 was as follows:

Expenditure in 1914.

	In rubles
Education	106,975,000
Public health	82,574,000
Public welfare	5,147,000
Agronomic and economic measures	28,896,000
Veterinary services	10,462,000
Roads	17,511,000
Maintenance of administration	23,434,000
Other expenditure, service of debts, etc.	72,513,000
Total	347,512,000

These figures do not cover, however, the whole of the revenue and expenditure. They do not include the trading activities of the zemstvos nor their insurance work, which was carried on with a special insurance fund. If we include these items, there can be no doubt that the zemstvo budget for 1914 was in excess of 400,000,000 rubles.

The Russian Government budget for 1914 was 3,600,000,000 rubles, or only nine times as large as the zemstvo budget for the forty-three provinces. Notwithstanding the extraordinary growth of the government budget during the few years immediately preceding the World War, the zemstvo budgets were expanding more rapidly. The budget of the zemstvos in thirty-four provinces increased from 171,687,700 rubles in 1910 to 292,049,800 rubles in 1914; during the same period the state budget increased from 2,522,000,000 rubles to 3,613,000,000 rubles. While the state budget increased by only 39 per cent during these four years, the zemstvo budget increased by 70 per cent.

The vast importance of the zemstvos in the life of the Russian state prior to the War becomes still more apparent when we compare, not the budgetary totals, but the appropriations made for the various branches of state and zemstvo activity. Thus, under the budget of 1914, the government expenditure under the head of Ministry of Education amounted to 155,300,000 rubles, whereas the expenditure of all the zemstvos on education amounted to 107,000,000 rubles; government appropriations for the Ministry of Agriculture were 145,000,000 rubles; the expenditure of the zemstvos for

agricultural purposes amounted to 28,900,000 rubles; and in the case of public health and veterinary work, we find that the zemstvos spent far more than the Government. In 1910, zemstvo appropriations for public health were 48,000,000 rubles, and for veterinary service, 4,700,000 rubles, whereas the corresponding appropriations of the Government were only 3,700,000 rubles and 2,100,000 rubles.

To gain a clear conception of the vast extent of the work that was being done by the zemstvos on the eve of the War, we shall here consider in greater detail their operations in the several branches.

Education.

As we have seen, the expenditure on public instruction by the forty-three provincial and 447 district zemstvos in 1914 amounted to 106,975,000 rubles. Of this sum, 28,153,000 rubles was received by the zemstvos from the Government in the shape of a subsidy for the needs of the elementary schools, and the balance, amounting to 78,822,000 rubles, was furnished by the zemstvos. The main portion of the educational budget of the zemstvos was devoted to the primary schools. As we have no exact data at our disposal, concerning the number of the zemstvo schools, we can state only approximately that they numbered about 50,000. There were about 80,000 teachers and more than 3,000,000 pupils in these schools.

As the result of a program of intensive school building, the zemstvos were able to house most of their schools in their own buildings and had no need to hire accommodation. Many zemstvos took particular care in building and equipping schools in conformity with the latest requirements.

Officially denied the right to intervene in the teaching in their schools, the zemstvos nevertheless found opportunity to be very active in the improvement of instruction. Six provincial zemstvos (Ryazan, Tver, St. Petersburg, Novgorod, Kazan, and Taurida) maintained their own teachers' colleges. If other zemstvos had no such institutions, it was only because of the opposition of the Government. Three provincial zemstvos (Tver, Yaroslav, Voronezh) shortly before the outbreak of the War established regular training courses for teachers, where the latter were given an opportunity to become acquainted with the latest methods.

After the revolution of 1905, when the Government showed more confidence in the activities of the zemstvos, conventions of zemstvo

school teachers became a very prominent feature of the work. These conventions were held under the auspices of the district zemstvo boards, were organized by experienced teachers, and discussed all questions pertaining to school life. Summer courses, both of a strictly professional and more general character, were now held every year under the auspices of provincial zemstvos for the benefit of the elementary school teachers. Nine provincial zemstvos (Vyatka, Ekaterinoslav, Kaluga, Kursk, Poltava, Smolensk, Tambov, and Taurida) maintained exhibitions of up-to-date school equipment. These institutions also supplied the teachers of the elementary schools with equipment, besides teaching the making of such equipment. Special workshops devoted to this purpose existed at some of these exhibitions, and that of the provincial zemstvo of Vyatka, which supplied schools practically throughout the Empire, became justly famous.

In the out-of-school educational field the zemstvos also developed a vigorous and extensive activity. During the winter months the district zemstvos generally organized popular lectures, with lantern slides, on various branches of knowledge, and in many places the schools established evening classes for adults. During the years immediately before the War several district zemstvos in the provinces of Nizhni-Novgorod and Samara had taken the initiative in opening social halls in the rural centers.

Library work, likewise, developed rapidly. An inquiry conducted in 1914 by the Society for Library Study in thirty-five out of the forty-three zemstvo provinces brought out the fact that there were then in existence 12,627 public libraries in the villages. This figure, to be sure, is not very impressive when compared with those relating to western Europe or America. However, when we consider the low educational level of the Russian peasantry, illiterate almost to a man only fifty years ago, and when we consider, furthermore, the fact that those provinces which had no zemstvos did practically nothing for out-of-school education, we shall have to admit that the achievement of the zemstvos in this domain was truly remarkable. The same inquiry established the fact that the sums spent on out-of-school education by the provincial zemstvos in these thirty-five provinces in 1914 amounted to 1,020,000 rubles and the sums spent for the same purpose by the district zemstvos to 1,639,000 rubles, or a total of 2,659,000 rubles.

To make books cheaper and more accessible, many of the zemstvos opened bookstores which operated as independent commercial establishments, but charged only enough to obtain a return on the invested capital sufficient to keep the business going. Bookstores were found to be maintained by eighty district and seventeen provincial zemstvos. Their turnover differed widely. The average turnover of the district zemstvo stores was 28,000 rubles, with a minimum of 500 rubles and a maximum of 97,000 rubles. The average turnover of the provincial zemstvo stores was 125,000 rubles a year with a minimum of 35,000 rubles and a maximum of 190,000 rubles.

During the few years immediately preceding the War the whole work of primary education was being gradually shifted from the Government to the zemstvos. The latter were granted the right to open higher schools also. In a majority of provinces the zemstvo boards organized special departments of elementary education, which gradually concentrated under their control the schools. They began modestly with the collection of school statistics but eventually extended their activities to all branches of the school life.

Thus the long struggle of the zemstvos to secure the control of elementary education was crowned with success and ended in complete victory.

Public Health.

Previous to the establishment of the zemstvos the rural population was left practically without any medical attendance. Half a century later, however, on the outbreak of the War, the average radius of a medical district, that is an area having at least one hospital or dispensary, and providing free medical aid, was only a little more than ten miles. In the densely populated provinces of central Russia this radius was, of course, even smaller. In 1914 there were in forty zemstvo provinces[3] 3,300 such medical districts, of which 2,459 had permanent, fully equipped hospitals, while the rest had small dispensaries. In addition to these, there were in these districts 3,441 public health stations under the immediate supervision of a junior medical officer (*feldsher*) and under the general control of the district physician. One zemstvo hospital served about 40,000 rural population and the residents of the district towns, while one

[3] This does not include three provinces where zemstvo institutions were introduced only in 1913.

public health station took care of about 15,000 people. The provincial zemstvos maintained in the chief town of the province large hospitals with specialists, and institutions for mental diseases. In 1912 the hospitals of the provincial zemstvos had on their rolls 300 doctors, 393 junior medical officers, and over 7,000 patients under treatment. In the hospitals for mental diseases there were in 1913 216 physicians, 436 junior officers, and 26,300 patients. Some of the zemstvo institutions for mental diseases (for example, the Burashev Colony of the Tver zemstvo) enjoyed a high reputation among the best institutions of their kind.

The zemstvo hospitals required an enormous amount of medical supplies. As early as 1901 they had spent 4,500,000 rubles for this purpose. To produce cheaper medical supplies, in view of this large consumption, became a vital necessity for the zemstvos, and the result was that certain provincial zemstvos established their own warehouses for such supplies. The first and largest of these was that organized by the provincial zemstvo Tver, its turnover reached 620,000 rubles in 1914. To reduce the price of medical supplies for the public, the zemstvos also opened a number of pharmacies where medicines were dispensed at low prices. In 1914 there were 173 such pharmacies in existence. They were all able to compete successfully with the private drug stores and compelled them to reduce prices.

During the fifteen years before the War the provincial zemstvos were gradually introducing regular public health services. Organizations for this purpose were functioning already in fourteen provinces. These institutions had charge of medical statistics, sanitary and anti-epidemic measures (organizing special forces to fight epidemics), and they participated in the drafting of plans for school buildings, etc. The health boards of the provincial zemstvos summoned their doctors to periodical conventions and, generally speaking, gradually played the leading part in the organization of the local public health service.

The organization of vaccination for smallpox was likewise under the control of the zemstvos, and the result was that the epidemics of this disease, which had previously caused enormous ravages and loss of life, were being gradually stamped out. As a rule, the zemstvos obtained their smallpox vaccine from the central institutions supplying it, but sixteen zemstvos had already established their own laboratories, producing more than 50,000 doses of this product an-

nually. Requiring vast amounts of other anti-epidemic vaccines and serums, the zemstvos proceeded to set up their own bacteriological laboratories for their production. In 1914 such institutions were maintained by the following eleven provincial zemstvos: Vyatka, Ekaterinoslav, Perm, Samara, Saratov, Smolensk, Tula, Ufa, Kherson, Chernigov, and Tambov.

Of the twenty-nine Russian Pasteur Institutes for the treatment of rabies, five belonged to the Government, eight were maintained by private individuals and medical associations, three belonged to the municipalities, three were under the joint auspices of municipalities and zemstvos, and ten were maintained by the zemstvos alone.

Eight provincial zemstvos had special sanitariums for mineral water cures or mud-bath treatment. The mud baths of Saki maintained by the Tauride zemstvo were famed throughout Russia and attracted as many as 2,500 patients every year from all parts of the country.

In concluding our brief survey of the public health work of the zemstvos, we may also mention the establishment of special training schools for junior medical officers and midwives. Such institutions were maintained by twenty-eight provincial and two district zemstvos.

Orphanages.

Among the legacies inherited by the provincial zemstvos from the Departments of Public Welfare of the old era were the homes for the aged and orphanages for abandoned children. The former institutions continued to be maintained by the zemstvos on about the same modest scale as previously. As for the care of abandoned children, however, it may be stated that some of the zemstvos achieved substantial results. Apart from orphanages for abandoned children, eleven provincial zemstvos established orphanages for children who had lost both parents, while nine zemstvos organized in connection with orphanages the so-called institution of "patronage," that is, boarding out the children, until they came of age, with peasant families. Naturally, adequate supervision was organized to see that such children were properly brought up and educated. Many zemstvos had several thousand such wards to care for.

During the last years before the War, as a result of industrial expansion and the consequent increasing drift of the rural popula-

tion to the cities, the number of abandoned children coming under the care of the zemstvos increased considerably and the problem of providing for them was becoming more and more serious and being discussed very earnestly at the zemstvo assemblies. A series of reforms was outlined and the larger cities, which were the greatest sinners in respect of the abandonment of children, and where the greatest number of orphans were found, were made to share in the financial support of these institutions.

Veterinary Service.

Some idea may be gained of the importance of the zemstvo organization in the veterinary field from the following figures:

Number of Veterinary Surgeons and Junior Officers in 1907.

In the service of:	*Number of veterinary surgeons*	*Number of junior officers*
Government		
civil	564	267
military	273	...
Zemstvos	1,045	1,952
Municipalities	246	228
Independent practitioners	120	...
Total	2,248	2,447

When we consider the fact that in 1870 there were only twenty-two veterinary surgeons in the thirty-four zemstvo provinces, it is fair to say that veterinary service in the rural districts owed its development exclusively to the zemstvos. During the few years before the War each district in the zemstvo provinces was divided into several veterinary surgeon or junior officer areas; the veterinary officers attended to stricken animals and engaged mainly in vaccinating cattle and horses against plagues and epidemics. Twenty-three provincial zemstvos had their own veterinary laboratories producing vaccines against glanders, Siberian plague, and other contagious diseases. On the zemstvo veterinary staffs rested most of the responsibility for taking measures of a sanitary and police character against the spreading of animal plagues by herds moving from place to place. Seven provincial zemstvos had organizations for the insurance of live stock against epidemics.

Assistance to Farmers.

At the beginning of their career the zemstvos, as stated above, devoted their principal attention to questions of education and public health, and it was only on a later date that they became seriously concerned with measures of economic welfare. Nevertheless, at the outbreak of the War the activities of the zemstvos in this field had assumed a very important character.

First of all we have to note the zemstvo organization of agricultural aid. In this field the Government rendered the zemstvos very substantial support by means of large subsidies. Moreover, this was practically the only zemstvo activity in which, thanks to the high standard of the personnel of the Ministry of Agriculture, the local representatives of the Government were able to work in close collaboration with the zemstvos and their agricultural experts. In 1914 the forty-three zemstvo provinces had a total of 7,410 members of various agronomic staffs, of which the zemstvos controlled 5,806 and the Government 1,604. The distribution of functions between government and zemstvo agronomists was adapted to local conditions arranged to meet the requirements of practical work.

In those provinces or districts where, for various reasons, the assistance of the zemstvos to the farmers was little developed, the main burden of this work was left to the government officers, but this was an exception to the general rule. In 1914 there were only two zemstvo provinces, Mogilev and Stavropol, where more government than zemstvo agronomists were at work, and this only because the zemstvos had been established there recently.

How important was the part played by the zemstvos in advancing agriculture may be seen from a comparison of the following figures. In 1912 the zemstvos appropriated for this purpose in forty zemstvo provinces the sum of 12,185,000 rubles, while the Ministry of Agriculture spent for the same purpose throughout European and Asiatic Russia the sum of 17,920,000 rubles, of which only 6,149,000 rubles was allotted to the zemstvo provinces.

Other Measures for the Advancement of Agriculture.

Among other measures of the zemstvos for agricultural improvement we have to note the following.

Model fields and farms. These were under the management of ex-

perts and enabled the population to study the application of improved farming methods adapted to local conditions. Such model institutions, of which there were sometimes several in one district, were established by about one-third of all the district zemstvos.

Experimental stations. These were as a rule organized by the zemstvos, and more rarely by the Government or by agricultural societies, aided by the zemstvos. At the stations tests were made and experiments conducted with various methods of cultivation, varieties of seeds, special crops, etc. Thirty-seven out of the forty-three zemstvo provinces maintained 159 such establishments. During the few years preceding the War the zemstvos, as well as the agricultural societies aided by the zemstvos, inaugurated a system of control stations to examine seeds and fertilizers. In 1914, seventeen zemstvo provinces had a total of twenty-five control stations. The zemstvos also began to pay attention to the high percentage of impurities in the seed grain used by the peasants, and the result was that the zemstvo provinces were soon covered with a regular network of grain-cleansing stations.

Improved breeding of draught animals and cattle was greatly promoted by the zemstvos importing special breeds of foreign as well as domestic sires (stallions, bulls, and even rams and boars) and establishing breeding stations. The government studs maintained at various places throughout Russia were, as a rule, heavily subsidized by the zemstvos.

The activities of the zemstvos in the agricultural field were so far reaching and presented so many different aspects that it is impossible for us to enumerate them all in this chapter. We must confine ourselves to emphasizing here the part played by the zemstvos in the promotion of agricultural knowledge. They opened agricultural schools, both elementary and secondary, and some of these (for instance, the school maintained by the Alexandrovsk district zemstvo in the province of Ekaterinoslav) were known throughout Russia as model institutions. It may be said without fear of exaggeration that entire new branches of agriculture grew up, if not on the direct initiative of the zemstvos, at least in a considerable measure thanks to the work done by them. The grass cultivation in the provinces of Moscow and Tver, the butter-making industry in the province of Vologda, and other such innovations, are instances of this.

The zemstvo stores of agricultural machinery, implements, and

seeds were an important feature in the organization of agricultural aid to the peasants. This business developed very rapidly and at the beginning of the twentieth century, if the traditional wooden plow of the Russian peasant had practically everywhere given place to the modern iron plow and if a large number of peasant farms had been equipped with up-to-date winnowing and threshing machines, and grain in the south of Russia was being harvested almost universally with the aid of mowing and reaping machines, this transformation was due in a very large measure to the work of the zemstvo stores of agricultural implements. In 1913 there were in the zemstvo provinces 839 such stores many of which had branch offices. Their turnover ran into scores of millions of rubles. Thus, according to M. Veselovsky[4] the turnover of the agricultural stores of only four provincial and fifty-seven district zemstvos in 1914 had been 6,895,000 rubles.

The zemstvo agricultural stores were operating in close contact with the rural coöperative societies, which were developing very rapidly during the years immediately preceding the War, and it was with their assistance that the zemstvos stores conducted their trade in seeds, machines, and implements. Many district zemstvos also organized, through the agency of their stores, temporary loans of improved agricultural machinery to the peasantry, thereby doing much to make modern machinery popular. For the purchase of agricultural machines and implements at home and abroad, the zemstvos formed special associations. The most important of these was that of Orel, which included nine provincial and forty-one district zemstvos; another important association of this kind was that of Kiev, uniting two provincial and twenty-one district zemstvos in southwestern Russia.

Among measures designed to improve agriculture, and taken also partly in the interest of public health, we must note the *hydro-technical enterprises* launched by twenty-six provincial and three district zemstvos, for digging and drilling wells, building dams, and other works to improve the land, such as the draining of swamps and marshes, etc.

In localities with a highly developed cottage industry the zemstvos succeeded in accomplishing a considerable amount of useful

[4] *Zemstvo Yearbook* for 1916.

work for its further promotion, by providing marketing facilities, furnishing artistic patterns and models to the producers, organizing exhibitions of their goods, and providing other facilities. The largest and most widely known of all the zemstvo stores for the sale of the products of the cottage industry (with an exhibition and workshops attached to it) was that of the Moscow provincial zemstvo, which sold its goods not only throughout Russia, but even in foreign countries. Of great importance in the development of the cottage industry were the stores maintained by the provincial zemstvos of Kostroma, Ufa, Vyatka, and other provinces, not to mention the stores belonging to numerous district zemstvos.

During the last few years preceding the War, the system of banks (funds) maintained by the zemstvos expanded very rapidly. By January 1, 1915, the zemstvos had opened 239 such institutions, with a total balance of 85,958,900 rubles. Through the medium of these banks, just as through their agricultural stores, the zemstvos were closely connected with a large network of rural coöperative societies.

In concluding our survey of the activities of the zemstvos in the economic field, we cannot omit the vast amount of work that was accomplished by the statistical bureaus of the provincial zemstvos. Surveys, undertaken by the zemstvos for various practical purposes, such as the appraisal of real property, supplied a wealth of material without which an adequate study of the economic condition of the country would have been impossible.

A majority of the provincial zemstvos had special offices for current agricultural statistics, which collected the yearly figures of the harvest, grain prices, wages, and similar important data. These statistics were found to be more complete and reliable than those assembled by agents of the central government, and it is to be regretted that the traditional conflict between the bureaucracy and the zemstvos stood in the way of their effective coöperation in this field.

Fire Insurance and Prevention.

Fire insurance constituted one of the most important fields of zemstvo activity. When the zemstvo institutions were established, fires in the rural districts were a veritable scourge to the peasants, owing to the fact that their buildings, mostly of wood and thatch, stood so close together. Every fire breaking out in a village would

almost inevitably end in the destruction of large groups of buildings, and very often the whole village would burn to the ground. Villages which were prosperous and flourishing one day would thus on the next be reduced to desolation.

At that period the peasants had not yet come to realize the necessity of insuring against loss by fire. It was necessary, therefore, to pass a special law making the fire insurance of the peasants' buildings compulsory. The management of this compulsory insurance was left to the provincial zemstvos. It was they who drew up the scales and the rates to be applied in appraising the buildings to be insured, and they also determined the premiums which were collected by the same method as local taxes. These premiums were credited to a special insurance fund out of which compensation was paid for fire losses. The zemstvos were also empowered to devote these funds to other measures designed to combat the fire peril.

The compensation paid on the fire insurance policies under the compulsory insurance scheme was considerably below the actual cost of the buildings, and the zemstvos left it to the discretion of the peasants to pay additional premiums if they desired fuller compensation for fire losses. Moreover, the law left it to the initiative of the provincial zemstvos to organize a voluntary fire insurance for movable as well as immovable property on the same basis as that of the private insurance companies. By 1914 the zemstvo insurance organization, which had originally confined itself to the narrow limits of compulsory insurance, had greatly expanded. With the rising of the educational level of the population, and thanks to the efforts of the zemstvos, the compulsory system was gradually becoming a voluntary one, so that the advisability of abandoning the compulsory insurance plan was already being seriously considered.

In 1912, the insurance premiums collected in the forty-three zemstvo provinces reached the sum of 34,090,497 rubles and was composed as follows: compulsory insurance, 14,045,990 rubles; supplementary, 12,412,058 rubles; voluntary, 7,632,449.

When we bear in mind that the premiums paid to all private insurance companies in Russia during the same year amounted to 42,954,000 rubles, we gain a fair idea of the importance of the zemstvos in the insurance business.

In 1904 and subsequently, some of the zemstvos combined into a union for the reinsurance of heavy risks. By 1914, nineteen pro-

vincial zemstvos were included in this union. In the same year the amount of 532,758 rubles was collected in premiums by this organization, while 93,625 rubles was paid out against claims. The funds were used by the provincial zemstvos not only for the insurance business proper, but also for various measures of fire prevention, on which large amounts of money were spent. Most of the zemstvos supervised the building plans for new settlements with a view to the reduction of the fire peril, and many other zemstvos issued loans and paid bonuses for the construction of fireproof buildings, besides establishing brickyards and tile works, opening stores to sell iron roofing material, and taking other measures useful in the prevention of fire. In 1915 the insurance organization of the Moscow provincial zemstvo alone sold 1,281,215 puds of iron roofing. Four provincial zemstvos, those of Tambov, Simbirsk, Novgorod, and Saratov, had special schools to demonstrate fireproof buildings. Extensive construction of fireproof school buildings served to popularize the idea. These activities of the zemstvos were frequently financed by the Government.

The zemstvos exerted themselves greatly to form fire brigades in the rural districts. During the three-year period, 1912-1914, they spent 2,138,658 rubles on the purchase of fire-extinguishing apparatus. Thanks to all these measures of prevention, the ravages that fire had been causing among the houses of the peasantry were being rapidly reduced.

Road Construction and Maintenance.

The care of the roads, with the exception of some state highways under the direct administration of the Ministry of Transport, was left to the zemstvos. For a long time this branch of their activities made very slow progress. Only after 1895, with the passage of a law authorizing the zemstvos to establish a special road fund, and later, when a portion of the government funds appropriated for road construction and upkeep was turned over to the zemstvos, did the latter proceed more energetically with the improvement of the public highways. In 1913 the provision made for this purpose by the budgets of all the zemstvos amounted already to 17,500,000 rubles.

In the same year, the network of roads under the control of the zemstvos attained a total length of 189,682 versts.[5] These included

[5] One verst = 0.7 mile.

4,890 versts of former state highways, 11,448 versts of macadamized or paved roads, 90,378 versts of improved, and 83,166 versts of unimproved earth roads. To maintain these roads in proper condition, the zemstvos employed large staffs of engineers, craftsmen, and laborers.

Postal and Telephone Service.

Russia did not possess a very dense network of railways until a comparatively recent time. Consequently, the conveyance of mails by road was an extremely important business. In most parts of Russia, it was in the hands of private firms acting as contractors for the Government. But a considerable number of district zemstvos operated their own postal service. The postmasters of these zemstvo offices were required to carry the mails within their respective districts, besides furnishing horses for the conveyance of the local agents of the Government and the zemstvo employees.

The organization of telephone communication by the zemstvos proceeded mostly during the few years immediately before the War. In 1914, the zemstvos had already been granted permits to open 219 new telephone systems, and 163 of these were already in operation, covering a distance of 65,344 versts, with a total cable length of 150,993 versts.

Conclusions.

With this we conclude our survey of the more outstanding activities of the zemstvos previous to the War. This survey is, naturally, far from complete. We have confined ourselves in the main to those features of their work which were typical, and have ignored others which were characteristic only of isolated zemstvos (such as maintenance of secondary schools, participation in the establishment of higher scientific institutions, organization of museums of natural history, and soil investigation).

If we add to this the fact that a large number of provincial zemstvos had printing plants and published periodicals, in which their work was discussed and which helped to diffuse useful knowledge through the rural districts, we can see clearly how powerful they were and what an immensely important part they played in the life of the Russian State. It is natural, therefore, that these bodies, controlling practically the entire medical service of the nation, carrying

out their economic activities through innumerable agencies, intimately connected with the coöperative producers', consumers', and credit associations, and having at their disposal a veritable army of devoted and capable employees, should have played so important a part during the years of the War. It must also be borne in mind that, untrammeled by bureaucratic routine and accustomed to independent constructive work, the zemstvos possessed a far greater elasticity than the government organizations, and were able to adjust their machinery to meet the unprecedented demands made by the War. They could not, however, escape its ruinous consequences.

CHAPTER III

ORIGIN AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN UNION OF ZEMSTVOS

Public Organizations for the Relief of War Sufferers.

WHENEVER grave public calamities threatened the country, the more intelligent elements of Russian society were found to be not only keenly alive to the needs of the situation, but anxious to do their best in the work of relief, through direct participation. They were not merely inspired by sentiments of philanthropy and humanity, but they were determined to offer their contributions to the relief work through representatives in whom they could have absolute confidence; they were anxious thereby to comfort and encourage the sufferers, mitigating the purely official and sometimes formalistic attitude of the authorities. This sentiment had been noted in Russia repeatedly in the past, and more particularly in cases of war.

The Government did not always look with favor upon public endeavors of this nature, seeing in them expressions of distrust and a desire to control the acts of the authorities. Moreover, in the opinion of the Government, the participation of public bodies in such activities could only complicate the work that had to be done and would impose restrictions on the procedure that would only interfere with the prompt and categorical character of the official measures. This explains why it was only gradually and in the face of much opposition that the public was able to attain its objects in cases like these.

In spite of this official attitude, attempts of the kind above described had already been made under the rather harsh and severe rule of Nicholas I. In the Crimean War, in 1854, ladies belonging to the best Russian society made their appearance in the military hospitals at Sebastopol, having at last induced the Emperor to grant them permission to render direct aid to the sick and wounded soldiers. The military authorities, however, as well as the medical staffs of these hospitals, received them in a spirit that was anything but cordial. But the command of the Tsar, coupled with the irreproachably tactful bearing of these women, at last forced their male opponents to acquiesce and make their peace with this "unheard-of innovation."

More than twenty years passed after the Crimean campaign, and the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 broke out. In this interval of time numerous changes had taken place in the world. At Geneva, the International Red Cross Society had been organized; and in Russia, too, a branch of the society had been established, although composed chiefly of government officials and therefore rather remote from the broader public. Local government had then been in existence in Russia for more than a decade; but it was not yet sufficiently strong to make its voice effectively heard. Still, the Russian Red Cross understood very well that, if it was to obtain powerful financial support from the local government organs and private citizens, it would have to widen its constitution sufficiently to admit into its ranks such outsiders as might be enjoying the particular confidence of the general public. In organizing its field hospitals for service at the front, therefore, the Red Cross put at their head representatives of the gentry as well as zemstvo leaders known throughout Russia. These hospitals were expected to work behind the front lines (in Rumania), but some of them advanced nevertheless into the zone of actual hostilities during critical moments in the struggle, to bring help to sufferers under the enemy's direct fire. The leaders of these hospitals have produced some excellent reports of their activities in the Turkish campaign.

The Zemstvos in the Russo-Japanese War.

Twenty-five years later, at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, the zemstvos were already fully conscious of their strength and influence. At that time the Moscow zemstvo board was presided over by M. Shipov, one of the most influential zemstvo leaders of the country. Reserved, determined, tactful, remote from revolutionary ideas or aspirations, he was at the same time a man of liberal views, and he felt confident that the zemstvos working in combination, ought to be able to counteract the effects of the War. He therefore made good use of every possible opportunity to coördinate the activities of the zemstvo institutions throughout the country.

At the beginning of 1904 he succeeded in calling together in Moscow the representatives of the zemstvos and created an organization for the relief of sick and wounded soldiers in which all zemstvos took part. He was chosen by the assembly as the leader of the whole movement. He decided to send zemstvo hospitals and canteens to Korea

and Manchuria, and appointed Prince G. E. Lvov, chairman of the zemstvo board of Tula, to direct these activities in the war zone. Fourteen zemstvos succeeded in complying with the formalities of the law, made the requisite appropriations of funds, and organized hospitals and canteens. But at this juncture the Ministry of the Interior decided to intervene and apply repressive measures, with the object of annihilating this attempt at zemstvos to coördinate their work. Prince Lvov, however, in a personal audience with the Emperor, succeeded in obtaining the full approval of the Tsar for the new zemstvo enterprise, and the imperial statements to this effect received publication.

To undo what had thus been done was no longer possible, and the Minister of the Interior, von Pleve, had to content himself with the following measures: (1) He prohibited the remaining zemstvos not only from joining the fourteen that had already succeeded in creating a union, but even from discussing this subject at their assemblies, and (2) at the very first opportunity that presented itself, he removed from the management of the zemstvo organization M. Shipov, whom he styled a "self-appointed head of the united zemstvos." It was only upon the death of this despotic statesman, in the autumn of 1904, that his orders were repealed and all the zemstvos of the country were enabled to join the organization.

The hospitals and canteens fitted out by the united zemstvos met with a hearty welcome at the front and, although nominally under the jurisdiction of the Red Cross, they were able, thanks to the untiring efforts of Prince Lvov, to secure almost complete freedom of action. After the War they were disbanded, but the united zemstvo organization continued to function, rendering to the people the kind of aid that they sorely needed at that moment—opening public kitchens in areas affected by famine, fighting the epidemics that were ravaging the country, doing everything within their power to ameliorate the suffering due to the unprecedented forest and village fires, and providing food and hospital treatment for settlers on their way to new land in Siberia.

The Outbreak of the Great War.

In 1914, the united zemstvos were under the leadership of Prince Lvov. No sooner was the report of the declaration of war received than he went to work. Premises were rented for supply depots,

orders were issued to prepare for the evacuation of the wounded, and provision was made to supply the future hospitals with linen, medical goods, and surgical instruments.

On July 25,[1] an extraordinary meeting of the Moscow zemstvo was held. In the report submitted to the meeting by the board we have a highly characteristic illustration of the patriotic sentiment that inspired the leaders and workers of the zemstvos at the outbreak of the War. The following passage occurs in it:

Russia is passing through a historic moment of exceptional significance. Events are developing with terrific speed. A storm unparalleled in the history of mankind is about to break out. But we have no fear of this imminent calamity. With perfect calm, with the confidence of courage, with noble enthusiasm, the sons of Russia are marching to offer their lives in defense of the honor of their country. Gone are now the barriers which have divided the citizens among themselves, and they all are united in one common effort. But it is impossible at this solemn moment to forget that, with the first rumblings of the coming storm, and simultaneously with the shouts of victory, there will also be heard the groans of thousands and scores of thousands of men wounded and dying on the battlefield. It becomes, therefore, the duty of those who remain at home to strain every effort to render them timely aid. Those left at home should take up positions in regular battle array, so as to be ready to carry out quickly, promptly, and efficiently the task of aiding the sick and wounded that will confront them and will probably assume gigantic proportions. Who, if not public institutions whose business it is to provide for the needs of the people and who have had many years of practical experience in caring for the sick, with organized forces at their command, should undertake the task of uniting the isolated efforts in this great work, which demands such an immense organization?[2]

The board proposed to the meeting to call upon all the zemstvos of the country to form a union and coördinate their work for the benefit of the army. This work was no longer conceived on the modest scale of the zemstvo organization built up almost against the law in 1904. The Moscow board now boldly and openly called upon the zemstvos to combine in an "All-Russian Union of Zemstvos for the

[1] All dates are according to the Russian calendar.

[2] *Report* (*Obzor Deyatelnosti*) of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos, Moscow, 1915, p. 20.

Relief of the Sick and Wounded Soldiers." Losing no time, the board had already placed itself in telegraphic communication with the provincial zemstvos and received from many of them expressions of perfect sympathy and promises to join the proposed union. The meeting unanimously approved the recommendations of the board and passed a resolution to summon two representatives of each zemstvo to Moscow, to meet there on July 30 for the purpose of forming the proposed union of all the zemstvos.

Organization of the Union of Zemstvos.

On July 30, 1914, accordingly a conference attended by representatives of thirty-five provincial zemstvos assembled at Moscow. The other zemstvos sent word that they were in full sympathy and joined the Union. The only zemstvo refusing to affiliate itself and preferring to act separately was that of Kursk.[3] The new organization established a fund amounting to 600,000 rubles (gold), which was all that the zemstvos had at their disposal. Soon after this, the Union was joined by the organizations of the Don Cossacks (who had no zemstvo), who contributed to the common fund the sum of 500,000 rubles.

The conference approved the constitution of the Union. The supreme power in the Union was vested in the conference of the deputies of the provincial zemstvos, each zemstvo having two representatives, one elected by the provincial assembly and the other by the provincial board. Moscow was selected as the meeting place of the conference. It chose the president of the Union—the High Commissioner—and a Central Committee composed of ten members.

In principle, the conferences were to direct the work of the Union, to issue orders, and to administer the funds, while the Central Committee was to serve as the executive organ. In practice, however, it soon became apparent that the zemstvo members had so much work to attend to in their respective localities that they were not able to go to Moscow frequently, to attend the meetings of the conference; and thus it came about that the work was gradually concentrated in the Central Committee. The functions of the conference were eventually reduced to the decision of certain general questions of principles.

[3] The zemstvo of Kursk was notorious for its reactionary character.

The local organs of the Zemstvo Union were the provincial and district committees. Their organization and procedure were left to the discretion of the provincial zemstvo. Funds appropriated by the provincial zemstvos for the relief of sick and wounded soldiers were paid into the central treasury of the Union. The latter then allocated them to the provincial committees, and these, in turn, to the district committees. Very soon, the central treasury began to receive donations and contributions from all over Russia, partly in cash and partly in kind (linen, warm clothing, etc.). Later, the Government, availing itself of the resources of the Union, gave it steadily increasing orders to supply the army with equipment and provisions, placing at the disposal of the Union large sums to enable it to carry out these orders.

Prince Lvov was elected President of the Union. M. Shlippe, chairman of the Moscow provincial zemstvo board, was chosen to act in his absence.

About a week after the organization of the Union, Prince Lvov had an audience with the Emperor. In the course of the conversation, Prince Lvov thus explained the aims of the new Union:

> The All-Russian Union of Zemstvos was formed only about a week ago. Its organization is of the simplest. A Central Committee has been formed at Moscow, and provincial and district committees locally. The whole organization has been built, not according to rigid and elaborate statutes, but on a basis of a powerful desire for collaboration. Out of their own resources, the zemstvos have been able to assign 12,000,000 rubles for the relief of the wounded. Our function is to receive the wounded from the army, transfer them to the hospitals, equip hospital trains and hospitals, heal our wounded soldiers and then send them back to their homes.[4]

The Emperor received this report with the same sympathy he had shown for the similar zemstvo organization in 1904. But among the higher government officials, the reaction to the Emperor's expression of pleasure with the zemstvo enterprise was now quite different from what it had been ten years earlier. The events that were taking place seemed far too grave and ominous to admit of opposition to this useful enterprise, and, moreover, there had been a change in the meantime in the relations between the Government and the public.

[4] *Report* (*Obzor Deyatelnosti*) of the Central Committee, p. 30.

On August 25, 1914, an imperial decree was issued giving official sanction to the Union of Zemstvos. It was recognized as an independent organization striving for objects similar to those of the Red Cross, and therefore entitled to use the emblem of the International Red Cross Society. The Minister of the Interior sent out a circular informing the provincial governors of the organization of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos and ordering them to coöperate loyally with the provincial and district zemstvo committees.

The Central Committee of the Union opened the following departments that set to work under its general direction: central depot (controlling all depots and warehouses belonging to the Union, as well as its purchasing commission), hospitals, evacuation, hospital train, donations, treasury, accounting, and secretariat. In course of time, as the activities of the organization expanded more and more, the number of departments was considerably increased, as we shall see later in the course of this study.

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE WORK OF THE UNION OF ZEMSTVOS

The First Steps.

The Union of Zemstvos began its work with very modest prospects. At the outset, it was given a quite definite scope by the medical authorities of the army, headed by the aged Prince Oldenburg. A straight line was drawn across the map from Moscow to Kiev, to separate the two areas in which the Government and the Unions of Towns and of Zemstvos were to do their work. East of this line, far behind the war zone, the Union of Zemstvos and Union of Towns were to operate, while west of it, in the rear of the army and in the immediate vicinity of the front, only the government organizations, that is the military hospitals and the semi-official Red Cross, were permitted.

Such had been the decision of the Emperor, and it had, of course, to be respected. The sum of 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 rubles had been collected by the Zemstvo Union, through zemstvo appropriations and voluntary contributions. This might have sufficed to furnish and maintain for a period of about half a year 25,000 to 30,000 beds and a few hospital trains. The plan was to receive the sick and wounded soldiers at certain railway junctions and convey them to the zemstvo hospitals scattered all over the country.

These modest plans had however to be abandoned very early. The territory from which the two Unions had been excluded comprised fifteen provinces in which the zemstvos had joined the Union and already made extensive preparations to take charge of the casualties of the War. This alone was enough to show that it would be impossible in practice to adhere to the restrictions originally imposed. Moreover, the experience in previous wars seemed to indicate that a moment would probably arrive when the authorities would be only too glad to obtain any assistance that might be offered them in the war zone, no matter from what source.

These expectations proved to be justified much sooner than could have been foreseen. The work in the rear was rapidly falling almost entirely upon the shoulders of the Unions. The medical department

of the army, as well as the Red Cross, were found to be very poorly prepared to cope with the gigantic task that was beginning to confront them and were compelled to strain every possible resource at their command to deal with the situation in the immediate vicinity of the immensely long battle lines. At this juncture the Unions were asked to elaborate a plan for the evacuation of the wounded to the interior. According to the initial proposal, the Zemstvo Union was to furnish at once more than 100,000 hospital beds to be apportioned among the provinces covered by the Union.

At the end of August, a telegraphic request to this effect having been sent out to the zemstvos, many of them reported that they considered it absolutely impossible to accomplish so prodigious a task by local means. Moscow then sent a reassuring reply, stating that the equipment as well as upkeep of the beds would be assumed by the Central Committee of the Union whenever local resources should prove inadequate.

After this, there was feverish activity and by the first of October, 1914, the entire task was accomplished: the zemstvos and the local committees of the Union had equipped in the provinces of the interior a total of 103,635 hospital beds.

At the same time the Union had to establish several central clearing stations and hospitals, at the request of the military authorities. When it was found that it would be necessary to open additional clearing stations, the work was again entrusted to the Union of Zemstvos. In the matter of new hospital facilities, too, the zemstvo committees found themselves compelled, contrary to their calculations, to go far beyond the original projects and open at Moscow many more hospitals, to deal with the enormous stream of casualties from the front. On July 1, 1915, there were already 172,079 zemstvo beds in the country, and by the first of September, 1916, this number had reached 195,273, with insignificant fluctuations.

Hospital Supplies.

To achieve such results, it was necessary for headquarters at Moscow to organize without delay wholesale purchases of the supplies required for hospital service. But the Moscow market was found to be practically without supplies. Previous to the War, it had been mainly Germany that had furnished Russia with medical goods, drugs, and surgical instruments. The War had come so suddenly

that no stores could be laid in. Nevertheless, the purchasing department of the Central Committee at once took up this work with a great deal of energy. In different sections of Moscow, it obtained spacious premises, which were often placed at its disposal free of charge, and very soon seven vast depots of medical supplies were organized.

At first it was impossible to dispense with the services of middlemen in the purchasing operations, even though they were very costly and, moreover, the orders were not always conscientiously executed. Only with difficulty and very slowly was it found possible to discard the traditional methods of commercial business and avoid their abuses. Many of the larger firms were drawn into direct business relations with the Zemstvo Union. From every section of the country reports were now being telegraphed by the Union as to what goods were locally available. Agents of the purchasing department were sent to various business centers in Russia and enabled, with the aid of the local committees of the Union and the zemstvo boards, to buy up considerable quantities of the required goods. At the central depot in Moscow a testing laboratory was set up with the help of teachers and instructors of the commercial schools, to compare goods received with the standard samples and to test them by approved technical methods. To attend to the daily expanding operations connected with the receipt and dispatch of goods, an association (*artel*) which deposited a heavy bond for its members, was engaged, and it agreed to furnish any number of men that might be required. All warehouses and depots were handed over to this organization, while the employees and officers of the Zemstvo Union were instructed to exercise a general supervision and direct the work.

Equipment.

In the course of the first four months of the War it was possible to make purchases of supplies and materials amounting to nearly 17,000,000 rubles. Since the demand from the various localities during the same period did not exceed the sum of 12,500,000 rubles, it will be seen that in this respect the Union had more than attained its object. The business of these depots, however, was not confined to purchasing, packing, and dispatching. If they had bought linen for patients and beds in the regular way they would have had to wait much too long for the orders to be executed, besides having to

pay enormous sums in excess of actual values. The Zemstvo Union therefore decided to establish its own workshops for designing and cutting up the materials, and to give out the actual sewing work to be done in the homes of seamstresses. The linen was received and paid for through the medium of coöperative and other organizations enlisted in this work. Later on the Union itself opened a number of distributing offices to give out such work, employing directly scores of thousands of needy women, mainly soldiers' wives.

The peak of the work of the depots came in September and the beginning of October, 1914. By the middle of October most of the beds of the Zemstvo Union were fully equipped and the need for linen considerably reduced. At the end of September, however, the Army Supply Department urgently applied to the Union for 7,500,000 suits of underwear. This order was accepted and executed promptly. This was only the beginning of a long series of orders from the same source to be executed by the Union in the course of the War. After this first order there came one for 240,000 army tents. Later, in November, 1914, there was a request for the immediate delivery of fur clothing for 215,000 soldiers of the Serbian army. Lastly, in January, 1916, the Union was forced to undertake the entire business of supplying the army with warm clothing, amounting to something like 24,000,000 articles. By this time, the Union had already delivered to the Army Supply Department 35,714,099 pieces of clothing prepared to its order. Parallel with this work, rigorous and urgent efforts had to be made to furnish the army with boots. This task was taken in hand by many of the local committees of the Union. Russia itself, however, proved unable to supply all the footwear required, and the Union sent a special commission to the United States, where it succeeded in buying up 3,000,000 pair of riding boots and 1,700,000 pair of army boots before January 1, 1916.

Gradually it became necessary to readjust both the central and local organizations so as to enable them to conduct the necessary purchasing operations and at the same time supply the needs of the Union itself, as well as the needs of the Army Supply Department, which were practically unlimited. The average number of articles of one kind or another required during 1917 for these various needs may be estimated at 5,000,000 a month. This included chiefly underwear, winter and summer clothing, peltry, tents, and sand-

bags for trench work. In addition to all these articles, boots had to be bought continuously, and this work, as we shall presently see, reached such vast dimensions that the Union had to undertake to collect the hides of slaughtered cattle and attend to the tanning, besides manufacturing the necessary tanning extracts.

Medical Goods and Surgical Instruments.

At the beginning of the War the supply of medical goods was carried on under great difficulties. At the outset, the well-stocked central pharmacy of the Moscow zemstvo served the needs of the Union. Soon, however, its stocks began to dwindle. The Union then made an attempt to collect everything of this description that could be found in the Russian market. At the same time (about the middle of August) the Union was able to establish connections with foreign markets. During the first four months of the War its total purchases of medical goods were valued at 1,245,780 rubles, of which goods to the value of only 291,689 rubles were bought in Russia.

These initial foreign purchases arrived at Moscow mainly during September, October, and November, 1914. Prices both in Russia and abroad were, of course, much higher than before the War, and in the case of some articles as much as 23 to 106 per cent higher. The prices of Russian goods were found to be higher than of imported goods, for the Zemstvo Union was exempt from the payment of customs duties and had the privilege of free transport for its purchases from the Russian frontier to the interior. The greatest increase in prices was noted in the case of the alkaloids and iodine preparations. Chemico-pharmaceutical preparations were accepted only in the original packing of the manufacturer and subjected to chemical analysis in the laboratories of the Union.

Still more difficult was the supply of surgical instruments and appliances. The exceedingly high prices charged for them abroad, the difficulty of finding the most suitable types, and the complicated purchasing organization itself, tended to reduce greatly the possibilities of foreign purchases. Only the most indispensable and ordinary articles were bought, in Japan, in the early days. Russian firms, however, did their best to come to the rescue, especially the *artels* of the cottage workers (for example, the Pavlovski *artel* of metal workers), who, working from patterns and samples furnished

by the Zemstvo Union, and, under its supervision, very quickly managed to produce twenty-five different types of instruments in most common use.

Considerable difficulty was at first met with in furnishing proper equipment for the operating rooms of the hospitals and for the disinfecting rooms. There was also trouble in finding a sufficient quantity of sterilizers and X-Ray apparatus. Gradually, however, orders for these articles were handed over to the big firms of Moscow and Petrograd. As for other articles required for the proper treatment of patients, there was an abundance of them in the Russian market, so that at no time was there any hindrance to the purchasing operations in these fields.

In the supply of dressing material, on the other hand, the Union experienced some very painful difficulties. The enormous demand and the deficiency of supply brought about an orgy of speculation, so that it was often necessary practically to force the speculators to surrender such material at any price. After a while, however, it was found possible to supply the local needs, and after the crisis of the first few months had passed, the big and reliable firms were given large orders. At the same time the Union was able to bring in foreign dressing material, chiefly from the United States. As frequent requests would come to headquarters for ready-made and sterilized bandages, it became necessary to open, under the supervision of doctors, several sterilizing plants, where the material was received mostly free of charge from large numbers of Moscow families who prepared it voluntarily, and also from various institutions such as girls' high schools, convents, and similar organizations.

These were only the first steps, however. As the work of the Zemstvo Union expanded it was found necessary to establish a permanent purchasing commission in London under the Anglo-Russian Committee for the utilization of foreign markets. This commission managed during the first six months of its activity to buy drugs alone to the value of 8,200,000 rubles. The total value of the medical supplies bought by the end of 1916 already approached one million rubles a month,[1] and for 1917 the Central Committee approved estimates providing for a total of 3,257,176 rubles worth of surgical instruments, disinfecting apparatus, and dental equip-

[1] *Kratki Obzor Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*) of the work of the Union of Zemstvos from March 12, 1916, to December 9, 1916, Moscow, 1917, pp. 24-25.

ment for the institutions maintained by the Zemstvo Union, and 14,151,970 rubles worth of drugs, to be bought in the Russian and foreign markets.[2]

By this time, the Zemstvo Union had opened two factories of its own at Moscow for the manufacture of drugs. One of them, which employed seven hundred hands representing twelve different workers' guilds, produced 4,000,000 rubles worth of goods a year at prices 15 to 40 per cent lower than the market prices. Another chemical work, converted from a brewery bought by the zemstvo, began to function in July, 1916. Expanding gradually and increasing its output under the management of the best chemists available, this plant was able by July, 1917, to manufacture 300,000 rubles worth of goods every month.

The scarcity of medical supplies during the War was so acute that many of the zemstvos were unable to dispense with the assistance of the Union not only for the war hospitals but even for their regular peace-time hospitals. How extensively this help was given to them will become apparent from the fact that by 1916 more than three-quarters of all the zemstvos were receiving their medical goods from the Central Committee of the Union.

This experience stimulated many of the zemstvo boards to contemplate the maintenance of zemstvo associations for the common purchase of medical supplies also in peace time. On June 10-12, 1916, a number of conferences were held by the Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union to discuss this subject, and were attended by 150 representatives from the provinces. As such an undertaking required, however, formal resolutions of the zemstvo assemblies, it was impossible to carry out the plan before the Revolution.

Evacuation of Wounded and Sick Soldiers.

Large masses of sick and wounded soldiers had been passing through the important railway junctions from the very first day of the War. In the overwhelming majority of cases these men were traveling from the front under very bad conditions. The evacuation authorities of the Ministry of War had at their disposal about twenty magnificent hospital trains, each of them having cost hun-

[2] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos, Moscow, 1917, Nos. 54-55, p. 185.

dreds of thousands of rubles and representing an excellent hospital on wheels. The number of such trains, however, soon proved absolutely inadequate. After serious battles they could remove at best only a small proportion of the casualties. Moreover, during the first months of the War the railways near the front were badly congested, so that even such hospital trains as happened to be available were not always able to reach the point where they were most needed. In order to cope with such emergencies, the military authorities were compelled to use whatever means happened to be available at the moment. Freight cars arriving at the front with munitions, provisions, or troops, would be immediately loaded with the sick and wounded and sent back to the interior.

These freight cars had, of course, no sleeping accommodation whatever and frequently lacked even straw bedding, so that the sufferers had to lie on the hard wooden floors. In the meantime, the nights were becoming chilly. There were no kitchens on these trains and sometimes they would arrive during the night at the clearing stations and canteens when the medical staffs and other attendants were absent. As a general rule, such a train would be accompanied by a single army surgeon, or perhaps only a junior medical officer or a nurse from some army hospital. Lacking practically everything that might help to alleviate the suffering of their patients, these nurses or doctors, acting under strict orders of the military authorities which required them to attend to six hundred or seven hundred charges, were simply forced to keep out of sight of their helpless patients, being unable to do anything for them. When these improvised hospital trains finally arrived at Moscow after many days, the appearance of the patients was often shocking. As long as clearing hospitals had not been established, the most that could be done was to make a hasty round of the train, dress some of the wounds, feed the men, and provide straw or perhaps wood shavings for bedding, to make them a little more comfortable. Frequently, however, it was impossible to do even this. Sometimes a train might arrive unexpectedly in the night or on holidays, when it was difficult to obtain necessary supplies.

All these facts compelled the Zemstvo Union to insist that it should be informed in advance of the arrival of every train. It proceeded to organize a continuous day and night watch of the medical personnel and opened a special supply depot for the most indis-

pensable articles. Such was the general situation as regards the transport of casualties from the front during the first month of the War. At this time, the Zemstvo Union was busily preparing trains for evacuations to the interior, that is to say, for the transfer of the sick and wounded from the clearing stations to zemstvo hospitals far in the rear.

Hospital Trains.

For the future, however, work at the front was also contemplated. The intention was to maintain, not regular trains, but convoys of six or seven freight cars which, traveling in one direction as parts of troop trains and therefore taking up the least possible space, could, upon arrival at destination, unload and within an hour clean and equip with bedding the unloaded cars of the whole train, place the wounded on board, and return with them to the hospitals. After unloading the wounded at their destination, the whole equipment was to be packed up again and put on board that special convoy of six or seven freight cars, and these would thus be ready again to be attached to the next troop or freight train going to the front. It was important to discover some equipment that would make even the inconvenient and cold freight car sufficiently comfortable and warm, and the work had to be organized in such a way that the equipment should be packed and unpacked quickly.

The division of hospital trains began to function in August, 1914, and on September 1 the first train was dispatched. It had cost 14,000 rubles and could transport four hundred wounded soldiers. Three days after the first train was completed, the Zemstvo Union received a telegraphic order from the head of the evacuation service to send a completely equipped freight car to Petrograd. The officer in charge of the department of hospital trains and his assistant took their places on their cots, the car was attached to the night express train, and on the following morning it reached Petrograd. A few hours later a special commission of generals, surgeons, and engineers of the War Department made a careful examination of the car. Explanations were given by the officer in charge. Three days later the Zemstvo Union was ordered to send immediately to the front five trains composed of such cars. On September 17 these trains left for Belostok, passed the boundary line which had originally been set up for the zemstvo by Prince Oldenburg, and thus

initiated a new phase of zemstvo work—at the front. It was admitted that the equipment had been very carefully thought out and that it was practical and convenient, and the Zemstvo Union was requested to equip at government expense thirty more trains; eventually the order was increased by another twenty. By December 1, 1914, forty zemstvo hospital trains were already in operation and toward the beginning of 1917 the number had increased to seventy-five. Up to January 1, 1917, the fifty trains in operation at that time had completed 3,360 trips and conveyed 1,626,531 men. We shall discuss the dramatic history of these hospital trains later on.

Field Detachments and Canteens.

In the beginning of September, 1914, word was received that the army at the front was anxious to have the assistance of the zemstvo field detachments and canteens. The Central Committee suggested to General Brusilov that it would be permitted to furnish two field detachments and canteens. The General promptly answered: "Please accept the deep appreciation of myself and the army. I ask you to direct the field detachments to Lvov (Lemberg), so that they may follow the advance of the army."

The Zemstvo Union set to work organizing two detachments similar to those which were equipped during the Japanese War. The first detachment left for Galicia on September 24, and the second on October 7. Altogether thirty-one detachments were organized. Their equipment varied greatly, depending upon the good will of the donors, since it was mostly individual zemstvos, banks, co-operative associations, and other such institutions that had shared in creating and maintaining them. The detachments were provided with equipment for one hundred to two hundred cots, with horses and wagons, water boilers, and field kitchens. The zemstvo representatives in charge of these units were given wide powers. They were expected to adapt themselves to rapidly changing conditions, so as to alter the nature of their work accordingly, pursuing one principal aim,—to assist the army in every possible way. Through the hospital trains, field detachments, and canteens, the Zemstvo Union was enabled to enter into constant and close relations with the army and, in trying to supply its wants as far as possible, gradually developed a far-reaching activity on all the fronts.

Committees of the Front.

With the number of the zemstvo institutions in the armies increasing rapidly, there arose the need of combining them for purposes of more efficient supply and leadership. In November, 1914, the front representatives of the Zemstvo Union met at Warsaw and adopted certain recommendations for the creation of a front committee to take charge of all zemstvo institutions in the war zone. The Central Committee approved the proposal and appointed one of its members as head of the new organization. Soon, however, it became clear that the Warsaw committee would not be able to direct efficiently the zemstvo institutions in Galicia. The remoteness and peculiar conditions of that theater of war demanded an independent organization on the spot. The result was that in January, 1915, a special committee of the Union was organized in the city of Lvov, and was known as the southwestern committee, as distinguished from the northwestern, which continued to function at Warsaw. Later, when the northwestern front was divided into a northern and western front, a similar division was established in the Warsaw committee. There were thus formed three zemstvo committees of the front: the western, at Minsk; the northern, at Pskov; and the southwestern, at Lvov (transferred later on to Kiev). When Turkey began hostilities a similar front committee was organized at Tiflis, and when Rumania joined the Allies, one was also established at the Rumanian front.

Within the larger committees of the western front this process of differentiation continued as their activities and the number of their institutions kept expanding. In the latter half of 1915 a special commissioner of the Zemstvo Union, with a limited regional administrative staff, was attached to the headquarters of each army at the front. On the western front, there were five such commissioners and four on the southwestern. In this way the Zemstvo Union was enabled to keep in close touch with the actual needs of each of the principal subdivisions of the army and, thanks to its permanent contact with headquarters, it was in a position also to satisfy more efficiently the needs of the various units within each army. The committees of the front were confronted with the following three principal problems: (1) how to satisfy the immediate needs of the army; (2) how to satisfy the needs of the laborers employed in dig-

ging trenches, building roads, and similar work; and (3) how to aid the local population and refugees in the war zone who were abandoning their homes before the invading enemy and retreating with the army.

Scope of the Work.

To cope with these tasks under war-time conditions required great organizing ability. How the needs were met in actual practice we shall attempt to describe later on. For the present we confine ourselves to pointing out the fact that, about the middle of 1916, when the Central Committee undertook the classification of the various institutions that had been established in the war zone, it was able to register 146 types and varieties grouped in the following main categories: medical, sanitary, canteens, transport of wounded, freight, charities, trading, veterinary, workshops, factories, abattoirs, dairy farms, laboratories, storage depots and warehouses, and institutions for the purchase of raw materials.

Toward the close of 1916 the number of such institutions belonging to the Zemstvo Union was as follows:

Institutions of the Union of Zemstvos in 1916.

Organized by	*Medical and sanitary*	*Canteens*	*Transport*	*Hospital trains*	*Workshops and factories*	*Stores*	*Depots*	*Others*	*Total*
Central Committee	13	..	7	65	22	1	25	41	174
Institutions of the provincial committees	3,211	44	30	5	40	..	35	89	3,454
Institutions of committees of the front	1,759	806	358	..	436	145	421	175	4,100
Total	4,983	850	395	70	498	146	481	305	7,728

It is easy to imagine how complicated the purchasing, bookkeeping, and other functions of the Central Committee at Moscow must have become by this time. New departments were established, in-

cluding an automobile department, department for the purchase of horses, financial, statistical, audit, anti-gas, disabled soldiers, Russian prisoners of war, refugees.

Relations with the Army.

Undismayed by this steadily increasing complexity, the zemstvo authorities at the front were expanding their work continuously and with undiminished enthusiasm. With the army, the Zemstvo Union had succeeded in establishing relations based on absolute mutual confidence. Whenever some unforeseen need arose, the military authorities appealed to the representatives of the Zemstvo Union, and in no instance did they fail to comply with the request. A plan would immediately be drafted, together with a tentative estimate, after which the army leader whom it might concern would carefully discuss it at his headquarters and, if approved, affix his signature; the statement would then be forwarded to Moscow for further action. Moscow would send it on to the competent authorities at Petrograd, but these very frequently caused long delays, pared down the estimates and, generally speaking, appeared inclined to haggle; still, they very seldom refused to make appropriations for such requests from the front. Meantime, while these tedious negotiations were in progress at the capital, the work was already proceeding actively at the front, where it would be started without delay immediately upon receipt of the request from the military authorities, the money for this purpose being advanced by the Central Committee to the front committees.

Growth of Expenditure.

The activity of nearly 8,000 institutions employing hundreds of thousands of agents in one capacity or another naturally demanded an ever increasing expenditure. We saw that at the beginning of the War the combined resources of the Zemstvo Union did not exceed 12,000,000 rubles. During the first year of its work, however, the Union received from the Government 72,241,050 rubles (up to June 26, 1915), to reimburse it for sums already expended.[3] Six months later, that is, by January 1, 1916, the total sum appropriated by the Government for the needs of the Zemstvo Union had

[3] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Central Committee, No. 20, pp. 25-34.

risen to 187,467,244 rubles.[4] If we deduct from this the 72,000,000 rubles disbursed during the first year, we obtain an expenditure of 115,266,194 rubles for the second half of 1915, which makes already an average of 19,000,000 rubles a month. We thus see that during the third half-year of the War the average monthly expenditure of the Zemstvo Union had increased threefold. For the later period we have no accurate figures at our disposal, but if we accept the same rate of increase for the remaining two years of the War, we obtain an average monthly expenditure of approximately 60,000,000 rubles. That this figure is not in the least exaggerated will be apparent if we bear in mind that in the second half of 1916 the monthly budgetary expenditure of the committee of the western front alone amounted to 10,000,000 rubles, and when we consider that five such committees were in existence at the different fronts. In addition to this, the Union had to maintain throughout Russia about 3,000 hospitals, bear the expenses of its hospital trains, execute the steadily increasing orders of the Army Supply Department, etc. If we take into account, furthermore, such amounts as the Government, unwilling to enhance the importance of the Zemstvo Union, preferred to pay directly to individual zemstvos for the relief of refugees, orphans, and war invalids, and to fight epidemics, we find that the total sum of such government appropriations for both the individual zemstvos and the Union of Zemstvos for the thirty-eight months of the War must be reckoned, at the very least, at 1,500,000,000 to 2,000,000,000 rubles. However, it should be borne in mind that these figures do not yet cover all the undertakings of the Zemstvo Union.

Munitions and War Material.

In the spring of 1915, when it was found that all munitions were exhausted, so that the practically unarmed Russian army were forced to retreat under exceptionally difficult conditions, the Zemstvo Union thought it its duty to come to the relief of the army by taking a most active part in the supply of munitions. On June 5, 1915, a conference of zemstvo representatives decided that such

[4] *See* financial report of Central Committee for January 1, 1916, in *Kratki Ocherk Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*) of the work of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos, Moscow, 1916.

work fell properly within the sphere of activities of the Zemstvo Union. Zemstvo committees for the supply of the army were thereupon established by all provincial and district zemstvos. Their first task was to "mobilize the industry, large and small, and to organize, with the aid of the zemstvos, the scattered technical resources of the country."

As early as July, 1915, the Zemstvo Union received from the War Department millions of rubles' worth of orders for various articles of military equipment and munitions. Among these we find not only the usual articles of supply issued by the Army Supply Department, such as wagons, harness, field kitchens, horseshoes, tarpaulins, knapsacks, saddles, etc., but likewise shells for the artillery and other highly technical articles, such as mortars, hand grenades, trench tools, field telephones. All such orders were immediately distributed among the local organs of the Zemstvo Union, and, in addition to these, the Central Committee established its own plants, including one for the manufacture of three- and six-inch shells, and factories to produce sulphuric acid, telephones, tarpaulins, and so on.

Representatives of the Union of Zemstvos and the Union of Towns had expressed a strong desire that the two unions should cooperate more closely in equipping and supplying the army. The result was that representatives of both unions met in July, 1915, and formed a separate executive committee for the supply of the army, known as the *Zemgor*, which hereafter took charge of these responsible tasks.

CHAPTER V

THE ZEMSTVOS AND THE ZEMSTVO UNION

Local Support.

The few million rubles that the zemstvos voted to be placed at the disposal of the Zemstvo Union were a negligible quantity by the side of the hundreds of millions subsequently appropriated by the Government for the work of the Union. The fact is that the Government was absolutely compelled to make these appropriations, because there existed no other organized body capable of giving any effective assistance in this great national calamity.

The source of the strength of the Zemstvo Union lay in the zemstvo institutions and local committees of the Union, which made every attempt to rally and organize the vital forces of the nation. It was probably the first time in the history of Russia that such a wide scope was allowed by the authorities to popular initiative, and that this initiative was permitted to manifest itself on so vast a scale. Without this support the Government would have been absolutely incapable of coping with the unprecedented demands of the War. At the same time the important rôle of the new organization caused a great deal of apprehension among certain elements within the Government. The Ministry of the Interior was ready enough to utilize the local organizations of the Zemstvo Union in every possible way. This merely increased the displeasure of the hostile elements. The zemstvos, of course, loyally supported the Union, refusing to confine their activities within the narrow framework imposed by the methods and demands of the government officials who had been appointed to supervise their activities. The antagonistic element within the zemstvos found itself in this respect more and more at variance with the Government. The military failures only added fuel to this sentiment of opposition, and at the conferences of the zemstvo representatives at Moscow, which had been quite loyal at the start, there could now be heard more and more frequently speeches expressing opposition to the Government.

Appropriations of the Zemstvos for War Purposes.

The regular zemstvo meetings which drafted their budgets for the

following year were usually held in the autumn. Sometimes the provincial assemblies might be postponed till January, but by the end of January, in any case, all the zemstvos had their budgets ready and the assessment of taxes would also be finished by the same date. Hence, in the summer of 1914, when the hostilities began, the zemstvo budgets for 1914 had already been adopted and the taxes apportioned. After the declaration of war, when special meetings of the zemstvo assemblies were held, they were able to make appropriations for the war needs either out of their current funds, which, however, were already assigned to specific purposes, or by borrowing money from their capital funds or in anticipation of the 1915 budgets. Under these circumstances, of course, the zemstvo appropriations for the war needs could not be of very large amount in 1914. The provincial zemstvos, having at their disposal various special funds, were in a better position than the district zemstvos. It is natural, therefore, that most of the appropriations should have been made by the provincial zemstvos, and that appropriations should have been made by only 39 out of the 440 district zemstvos. According to the inquiry conducted by the Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union, the total sum appropriated in 1914 by the provincial zemstvos, excepting that of Kursk, for the war needs, amounted to 12,000,000 rubles, and by the district zemstvos to only 184,000 rubles.

The assemblies of the district and provincial zemstvos in the autumn of 1915, being now able to make provision for war appropriations in their budgets, considerably increased these amounts. According to the same inquiry, the total of all appropriations made by all the provincial (excepting Kursk) and 312 out of the 440 district zemstvos for this purpose in the course of the first year of the War amounted to 32,056,100 rubles (20,838,600 rubles by the provincial zemstvos, and 11,217,500 rubles by the district zemstvos), or more than 10 per cent of the total amount of all zemstvo budgets and about 17 per cent of the zemstvo taxes on real estate.

Not all the zemstvos responded in an equal measure to the new needs created by the War. Thus, for instance, the zemstvos of Taurida province appropriated only 2.9 per cent of their budgets, or 4.4 per cent of the assessed taxes, whereas the zemstvo of the province of Kharkov appropriated 23 per cent of their budget, or 35.2 per cent of their total tax assessments. The size of the appro-

priations made by the zemstvos may have been influenced by the degree of patriotic sentiment that inspired one zemstvo or another. Another and more tangible influence, however, should be noted, namely, the extent to which the local population may have been burdened with zemstvo taxes. This probably explains why, of eight provinces whose zemstvos made maximum war appropriations as compared with the total of their appropriations (more than 20 per cent),[1] six provinces belonged to the group in which the zemstvo institutions were only recently introduced and the burden of local taxation was, therefore, relatively light. Conversely, all those provinces which had made the lowest appropriations for war needs (less than 10 per cent) belonged to the old zemstvo provinces.[2]

Zemstvo appropriations during the first period of the War (up to 1916) were distributed among the individual items as shown in the following table:

Zemstvo Appropriations in 1914-1915.

Items	*In rubles*	*Percentage of total*
Relief of sick and wounded	14,718,200	45.9
Relief of families of soldiers and care of war orphans	10,726,400	33.5
Relief of population in war zone	617,700	1.9
Expenditure connected with mobilization of zemstvo employees	2,566,700	8.0
Other war expenditure	2,595,000	8.1
Miscellaneous	832,100	2.6
Total	32,056,100	100.0

In 1916 and 1917 the zemstvo appropriations for the first item were considerably reduced. After 1914-1915, when the zemstvos appropriated nearly 15,000,000 rubles for the relief of wounded and sick soldiers, it was impossible to foresee what proportions the War would assume or how long it would last. This sum, therefore, seemed enormous at that time. As time went on, however, it was seen that, no matter what amount of money the zemstvos might appropriate, it would be absolutely insignificant relatively to the vast extent of

[1] Kharkov, Perm, Orenburg, Astrakhan, Kiev, Podolia, Minsk, Mogilev.
[2] Olonets, Novgorod, Pskov, Vladimir, Ufa, Taurida.

the needs, and the result was that the zemstvos not only ceased practically to spend their own funds for this purpose, but began to receive from the Government, through the Zemstvo Union, enormous sums for the upkeep of their hospitals.

The remaining zemstvo appropriations for the war needs were not only not reduced, but, on the contrary, showed a tendency to increase. In particular, the expenditure involved in caring for the families of zemstvo employees called to the colors became heavier. Moreover, a new item of expenditure appeared in the zemstvo budget in 1915, namely, the supply of food to the population, as a direct consequence of the War. Upon the whole, however, it may be said that, while the zemstvos during the first half year of the War did appropriate large sums out of their own funds for the general needs of the State, later on we observe a vast stream of government funds flowing into the zemstvo treasury.

Local Institutions of the Union.

During the first month of the War the specific war tasks of the zemstvos had been to provide a sufficient number of hospitals, equip them quickly, assist in evacuation and distribution of the sick and the wounded, organize public collections of funds and articles, and aid the families of those who were called to the front, or families who had suffered in one way or another as a consequence of the War. In course of time, new needs arose. The zemstvos had to take part in the purchasing operations for the supply of provisions and munitions for the army, assist millions of refugees sweeping into the interior from the war zone, take measures to combat the epidemics following in their wake, aid in the general food supply campaign, help to fight the high cost of living, take steps to counteract the curtailment of the area of agricultural cultivation which was already threatening, and, in general, help in preventing the decline of agricultural production.

Such were the tasks confronting the Union of Zemstvos. As the Union represented a combination of the zemstvos, it was natural to expect that this work would be carried out locally by the individual zemstvos. The creators of the Union, however, were fully alive to conditions as they existed locally and they were aware that, as has been noted previously, these local bodies were not quite free to act as they saw fit. Half a century of experience had taught the

government authorities certain methods by which they could, if they so desired, interfere with and even stop the regular zemstvo work, by standing upon the letter of the law or acting in strict compliance with ordinances that might be issued by the Ministry of the Interior. In solving the problems which were now besetting the zemstvos on every hand and required immediate action, there would be no time to engage in legal conflicts with the administration. In the abnormal conditions of war-time it would be impossible to accomplish anything without genuine enthusiasm, in the face of official obstacles, and without rallying the public to the standard of the zemstvos.

Half a century of bitter experience, however, had taught the zemstvos that it was precisely the unification and organization of the popular masses in their support that the Government was most afraid of. In the war zone, the zemstvos met with sympathy and confidence from the military authorities. But in the interior of Russia the officials of the Ministry of the Interior showed suspicion, fear, and even ill-concealed hostility. Here and there it was possible for the zemstvos to maintain friendly relations with a provincial governor, but there was no certainty or security anywhere, while hostile orders might be expected at any moment from Petrograd.

Provincial and District Committees.

In view of all these circumstances, the leaders of the Union decided to leave it to the discretion of the local zemstvo workers to establish, if necessary, special committees of the Union—provincial, district, and for smaller areas—to operate side by side with the regular zemstvo institutions. As extraordinary organizations, such committees would not be subject to the limitations of the zemstvo statutes, and would be more free to act as might be necessary. It should also be borne in mind that the executive organs of the zemstvos, composed of only a very few individuals, were overwhelmed with current business. The heavy demands of war work inevitably increased their burdens considerably and it became necessary to reinforce them by the addition of specialists and expert workers, and by combining the zemstvos with other efficient and capable local organizations.

This was precisely the intention of the resolution of the zemstvo representatives adopted on July 30, 1914, which provided that "the

method of organizing the provincial and district committees of the Union, as well as the smaller local organs, is to be left to the discretion of the local zemstvos." As a matter of fact, conditions differed greatly in the various localities and frequently required special methods of work. The organization of the local institutions was by no means uniform. There were provincial zemstvos that did not find it necessary even to appoint provincial committees. Such zemstvos would either entrust their war work to their regular boards, authorizing them to enlist the services of outsiders, or would select from among their own number representatives to take part in the local official or Red Cross organizations. This was the case in the provinces of Bessarabia, Olonets, Tula, Pskov, and Taurida. These zemstvos however were not very numerous, and most zemstvos did form special committees. Some of the provinces adopted for this purpose the comparatively simple plan followed by the Moscow zemstvo.[3] This was done by the provinces of Vitebsk, Vyatka, Kaluga, and Yaroslav. At other places we find provincial committees of an exceedingly motley composition. Here are a few examples. At Nizhni-Novgorod the provincial committee added to its membership a large number of local civic leaders, representatives of various government institutions and of municipal bodies, so that its total membership reached about forty. At Kostroma the provincial committee was composed of the provincial zemstvo board, the marshal of the nobility, deputies chosen for the Moscow Conference, the chief of the sanitation bureau, the senior physicians of the zemstvo hospitals, the senior municipal medical officer, representatives of the district committees, and of the bureau for collections. At Kiev the committee numbered seventy-four members, including representatives of all hospitals. The Stavropol committee included the provincial zemstvo board, six members of the zemstvo assembly, two zemstvo voters, a representative of the municipality, the chief of the sanitation department, a representative of the administration for

[3] The Moscow arrangement was as follows: the provincial committee was composed of ten members chosen by the assembly, of the entire membership of the provincial zemstvo board, of one representative for each district committee, of one member of the provincial zemstvo sanitation bureau, and of one representative of the provincial sanitation board. The district committee was composed of five members appointed by the assembly, and of all the members of the district zemstvo board.

the non-Russian nationalities (a government official), representatives of the clergy, the Red Cross, and of some of the Asiatic tribes.

The district committees were more uniform in composition, as the district centers naturally had a much smaller variety of institutions and of educational and charitable organizations, and, generally speaking, included fewer persons willing and able to assist the Union in its activities. In many districts the duties of the committees of the Zemstvo Union were performed entirely by the district zemstvo boards, who would enlist in the service any person that might prove useful. There were, however, a large number of district committees of the Zemstvo Union specially created. Thus, for instance, in the provinces of Astrakhan, Kostroma, Nizhni-Novgorod, Penza, Stavropol, Ufa, and Yaroslav, committees of the Union were organized from the very beginning of the War in every district, while in the provinces of Vitebsk, Simbirsk, Smolensk, and some others, such committees were established in a majority of districts.

Institutions for Smaller Areas.

The mobilization of the public forces of Russia by the zemstvos did not, however, confine itself to this. As the problems presented by the War continually increased both in number and complexity, the movement spread and affected wider and wider circles of the population. The district was still too large a unit. It formed on the average a territory of about 8,000 square versts with a population of over 200,000. Each district, it is true, was divided into twenty-five to thirty-five volosts with their own self-governing institutions for the peasantry, for purposes of police and tax collection. But these organs did not include among their members intellectuals of the non-peasant class, and they were, moreover, under the strict control of the officials of the central administration.

These institutions were found unsuitable for efficient public work. Besides, the Government itself, by the law of June 25, 1912, had charged, not the volost administrations, but special volost relief committees (*popechitelstvo*) formed in the event of mobilization, with the duty of looking after the needs of the families of mobilized men. The law permitted educated residents of the volost outside the peasant class to work on these committees. The latter, however, were not everywhere organized in 1914, and, where they did exist, they sometimes showed little initiative; not to mention the fact, that, liv-

ing under the watchful tutelage of the government authorities, they might remain indifferent to the requests of the district committees of the Union of Zemstvos. Sometimes they did coöperate loyally with the Union, but more frequently it proved necessary to look for other executive agencies in the volosts. In a majority of cases, it was found that other local bodies such as the parish committees were also unsuitable for relief work, for their duties were confined strictly to the care of the churches and the maintenance of the charitable institutions connected with the latter. Several zemstvos, moreover, already had their own organizations working within the districts, such as area committees for the relief of the poor or sanitary committees (in the district of Moscow and the provinces of Ekaterinoslav, Kaluga, Kostroma, and Ufa).

All zemstvo institutions covering small areas which already existed before the War were now utilized to their full capacity, but were found to be absolutely inadequate. In many places, volost committees of the Union of Zemstvos were introduced and new zemstvo charitable institutions were created. The organization of these different institutions showed a great variety, depending on local conditions and upon whether suitable individuals were available for this responsible work.

Most frequently, the volost committees would be formed from among the zemstvo deputies living in the volost, together with the volost elder, who was a peasant, two to three individuals chosen by the general meeting of the peasants, village priests, and zemstvo school teachers and doctors. Committees were sometimes established in some of the richer trading villages, at factories, mills, etc. There were even districts where the local committee of the Union found it necessary to create a regular network of village committees, as for instance, in the district of Ostrogozh in the province of Voronezh, the district of Orsk in the province of Orenburg, and others. All these small zemstvo organs in the volosts and villages received their instructions from the district committees of the Union or from the district zemstvos, carrying out their orders and reporting to them on the work accomplished and on the expenses incurred. They would also collect donations in money and in kind, and were supplied with the necessary funds by the district committee.

At the same time, side by side with the zemstvo, there grew up another important organization. We refer to the coöperative associa-

tions.[4] With the coöperative societies the zemstvos established very close contact both in Moscow and all over the country, working hand in hand wherever the opportunity presented itself.

There was a scarcity of suitable persons to direct local work and this was one of the main obstacles to the development of the undertakings of the zemstvos. Service with the army, both voluntary and compulsory, proved a severe drain on the supply of energetic and intelligent workers, of whom there had always been too few in the Russian villages. This is why the zemstvos were sometimes compelled to abandon the very idea of establishing their own organs within the districts. Whenever it was possible, they utilized the services of the volost committee for the relief of families of mobilized men. But the difficulty was that in many localities relations between the zemstvo and the government officials were not sufficiently cordial to permit proper coöperation.

The number of volost and village committees varied greatly in the different sections of the country. Moreover, all these organs were somewhat unstable; they would come into existence only to disappear again shortly; and, besides, there had never been anything like a proper enumeration or registration of them. We are, however, able to furnish data obtained by an inquiry made on June 25, 1916, in fifty-two districts. In forty-nine of these there were found volost committees created under the law of June 25, 1912. In fifteen districts no other organizations of this kind were found and the zemstvos were compelled to operate with their assistance. In ten districts there existed, apart from the committees mentioned above, only the parish committees, and it was only in two districts that the zemstvos succeeded in utilizing the coöperation of these agencies. Three districts had nothing but zemstvo institutions. For the twenty-four districts which had both kinds of organizations, the inquiry furnished complete and detailed figures. There were 576 committees of relief established under the law of June 25, 1912, making an average of twenty-four per district.

As long as the work was of a charitable character, it was possible to carry it on with this motley organization. But when it became a matter of stemming the decline of agriculture and fighting the high

[4] *See* Kayden and Antsiferov, *The Coöperative Movement in Russia during the War* (Yale University Press, 1929) in this series of the *Economic and Social History of the World War.*

cost of living, in addition to dealing with a large number of highly important and urgent economic problems, it was necessary to devise some better organization and coördination among these local bodies. The first attempt in this direction was made by the provincial zemstvo of Perm, which, with the sanction of the governor, introduced the so-called volost economic councils. These included representatives of the local residents on an elective basis, and all the zemstvo officers living within the volost, and the principal officials of the volost peasant administration. According to the terms of reference, "the volost councils are granted the right to hire a secretary-instructor, by agreement with the district zemstvo board." Three-fourths of his wages were to be paid by the provincial zemstvo, while the district zemstvo was to contribute the balance. The experiment of the Perm zemstvo proved very successful and was followed by other zemstvos.

The War undoubtedly stimulated local enterprise and energy. Not only the zemstvos, but likewise the Government fully realized the necessity of mobilizing all available public forces. It was not, however, the intention of the authorities nor in accordance with the tradition of officialdom to link up the small government units with the zemstvo institutions and thus expand and consolidate the sphere of zemstvo activities. When an acute need was felt for smaller local organizations to conduct the food supply campaign, the Ministry of the Interior found it impossible to confine itself to the existing volost administration or committees for relief. It attempted, in conformity with the law of October 10, 1916, to create special volost food supply committees on the same basis as the economic councils of Perm, with the participation of local representatives, but these were intended to be independent of the zemstvo organization.

The exigencies of the War, however, were such as to demand imperatively nothing short of volost zemstvos, to be formed on a uniform plan as a small, elective unit. Hasty and thoughtless local enterprises, resulting in an endless and uncoördinated variety of committees, offices, and councils, threatened to dissipate zemstvo as well as government forces in a general chaos. In place of organization there was sometimes only improvisation. The Government at last realized the need of proper legislation for a final solution of the problem of volost administration reform, such as had been urged for a quarter of a century, only to be repeatedly deferred by

the Government. At the close of September, 1916, the Minister of the Interior sent to the various zemstvo institutions the draft of a law setting up a small zemstvo unit and requested their opinions on it as soon as possible. The Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union invited the best authorities to examine the bill and then dispatched a lengthy memorandum on the volost to all the provincial and district zemstvo boards. However, even now there was delay, so that it was only on May 21, 1917, that is, after the Revolution, that the Provisional Government was finally able to promulgate the law on the volost zemstvo.

The Zemstvos and the Government.

The War inspired the zemstvo workers with genuine patriotic enthusiasm and a unanimous desire to support the Government in the prosecution of the War. Nevertheless, sentiments of opposition were aroused among the zemstvo workers from the very outset of the activities of the Zemstvo Union, after such sentiments had, subsequently to the Revolution of 1905, almost completely disappeared. This feeling of antagonism was due to the fact that the Government, fearing the growth of civic organizations that rallied the popular masses and competed with the official bureaucracy, was placing obstacles in the way of the Union.

The Central Committee of the Union was acutely aware of the Government's hostility. Whenever it was found that the authorities were absolutely helpless to do anything to meet new emergencies, and no one seemed willing to take the initiative, everybody looked toward the Unions for relief, and these were never found wanting, but grappled with the work in every way possible and never shirked responsibilities. No sooner, however, would the crisis be passed and the Government feel more secure, than the authorities would forthwith remember that the Union of Zemstvos had been sanctioned by the Emperor only for the purpose of aiding the sick and wounded soldiers. The next step usually would be to give precedence either to some bureaucratic organ or to a committee presided over by some grand duchess. While the Government was unable to dispense with the services of the zemstvos, the appropriations for these services would be made only through the medium of some charitable organization having nothing whatever in common with the zemstvos or through the provincial governors. On these occa-

sions it would also be emphasized very clearly that the Government was dealing with the individual zemstvos, and not with the Union.

This led to the frustration of several plans which had been very seriously considered by the joint committees of the Union of Zemstvos and Union of Towns, and numerous efforts made by these organizations were doomed. This is what happened in the matter of combating epidemics, caring for the children of killed or disabled soldiers, the relief of refugees, the organization of food supply, and many other serious questions. Under these circumstances it is but natural that discontent and irritation among the zemstvo workers should have steadily increased and manifested themselves very clearly at the conferences of zemstvos held in Moscow.

Conferences of the Union of Zemstvos.

Seven such conferences were held. The first two, which met on July 30, 1914, and on March 12-13, 1915, and were attended by sixty or seventy representatives, displayed a great deal of patriotic sentiment and were loyal to the Government, limiting the discussions strictly to routine business. At the third conference, however, which was summoned by telegraph on June 5, 1915, a considerable amount of uneasiness was already apparent. This was a moment when the army, lacking munitions, was forced to retreat. The Duma had been prorogued. This conference, "conscious of its responsibility and its duty toward the country in these days of sore trial," reminded the Government that, if the great common effort that is being made for the benefit of the army is to be successful, it will be "necessary to have a close union between the Government and the people, resting upon mutual confidence, and, to realize such a union in practice, it is indispensable to convoke immediately the State Duma."

At the next conference, which assembled on September 7-9, 1915, and was attended by 125 representatives, the chairman, Prince Lvov, in giving expression to the sentiments which animated the zemstvos, now spoke with far more determination, remarking, in the course of his address:

> We do not fight, nor have we now any need to fight, for the right of participating in the work of the nation. The facts themselves are now handing over that work to us, so that we have gradually advanced from our hospitals all the way to supplying the needs of the army in

the trenches, equipping it with the munitions of war, manufacturing shells, constructing fortified positions, and so on. . . . Unfortunately, however, we observe no collaboration between the Government and the people, and it is our duty to tell this to the Government very plainly.

The conference resolved, concurrently with the conference of the Union of Towns, to send a special deputation to the Emperor, to inform him of

the imminent danger of a fatal rupture of that inner unity which should exist between the people and the Government. . . . This menace can be averted only by a reform of the Government, which will be strong only if it enjoys the confidence of the country and is supported by the legitimate representatives of the people.

The deputation was not received by the Emperor, and the next conference, convoked in December, 1915, was not even permitted to assemble. It was only on March 12-15, 1916, that the zemstvo leaders were at last able to meet. This conference was attended by 165 representatives. They noted once more that

Russia is experiencing great and continuous anxiety regarding the cause of victory, as the result of the shortcomings of our political life . . . for the signs of internal decay in the government administration are constantly multiplying, and, up to now, the differences between the Government and the public have only increased.

The last warning that the conference of the Zemstvo Union was able to address to the Government was on December 9, 1916. Immediately after adopting its resolution, the congress was dispersed by the Government and prevented even from attending to its regular and urgent business, while the *Bulletin* of the Union was prohibited from printing the resolution.

Local Feelings.

A majority of the provincial zemstvo assemblies had supported the action of the Union in urging the convocation of the Duma and the need of a new government enjoying the confidence of the people, as early as the close of 1915. Thus, the provincial assembly of Tver declared that it was necessary to have "coördination in the actions of the Government and the public," that "victory over the enemy will be possible only with a Government enjoying the confidence of the

country and supported by the popular representatives," and that "it is necessary to resume at once the work of the legislative institutions." The zemstvo assembly of the province of Kostroma reaffirmed that "the struggle against the enemy can be successful only if the Government is headed by a ministry enjoying the confidence of the people and responsible to the Duma." The provincial zemstvo assembly of Nizhni-Novgorod insisted on the need of "summoning to the Government such persons as enjoy popular confidence." Similar resolutions were passed by the provincial zemstvo assemblies of Moscow, Smolensk, Samara, Astrakhan, and a number of other localities.

This political movement on the part of the zemstvo and municipalities, beginning in 1915, was similar to the movement observed at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, in that it expressed the sentiments of the more moderate circles of Russian society, who, better organized than the other classes, were able to take the initiative in uttering a warning to the authorities. But, as on the previous occasions, the authorities utterly ignored this warning. Just as in 1905, so in 1917, the struggle against the Government was taken up by unorganized popular forces and these forces, suppressed in 1905, succeeded in 1917 in ushering in a lengthy period of revolution.

Among other causes of discontent in the zemstvos, we may mention the general policy of the Government in the matter of food supply and the organization of provisioning the army, in which institutions of local government were allowed only a secondary part. Later on, no doubt, circumstances forced the authorities to abandon this work to the zemstvos. At the close of 1915 and all through 1916, leaders were often invited to attend various government conferences dealing with the problems of food supply (price regulation, grain levies, cattle requisitions, and other such matters), but these were not always settled in accordance with the wishes of the zemstvos. How acute the misunderstandings on this ground had become, and how keenly some of the zemstvos resented the economic measures of the Government, may be seen from the following resolution passed by the provincial zemstvo assembly of Orenburg a month before the outbreak of the Revolution: it declared that "if the Government will not announce, on March 1, 1917, that the vote of the zemstvo shall be decisive, and not merely advisory, in deter-

mining fixed prices, then the zemstvo will be unable to guarantee a sufficient area of cultivation in the spring of 1917, and on the contrary fears the occurrence of food riots." It so happened that the prophecy of the Orenburg zemstvo was fulfilled, for a month later food riots actually did break out, only not at Orenburg, but at Petrograd, culminating in the Revolution.

It is not easy to determine precisely how far the zemstvos were right in striving to dictate a food policy to the Government. In this matter, institutions of local government, as representatives of those classes which were engaged in food production, were naturally an interested party. Besides, it cannot be denied that in time of war the organization of food supply requires a vast amount of centralized control, such as we observe in every other country that took part in the War. It is true, on the other hand, that there were plenty of good reasons for the hostile attitude of the zemstvos to the Government quite apart from the quarrel over the food supply policy. The steadily increasing chaos, for which the Government was wholly responsible, was adding fuel to the disaffection not only in zemstvo circles, but in all classes of society. To this we have to add the effect of the consecutive defeats suffered by the army at the front, the struggle of the Government with the Duma, and the moral corruption in court circles and among the highest officials.

In speaking of the war activities of the zemstvos it is impossible to distinguish between the zemstvos and the Zemstvo Union. In providing for the needs of the War, the zemstvos were working loyally and in full harmony with the Central Committee of the Union, while locally the organs of the Union were acting in full accord with the zemstvo assemblies. The zemstvo boards were everywhere members of these committees. It is impossible, therefore, to state definitely where the work of the individual zemstvo ended and that of the Union began. Consequently, as we go into a more detailed description of the different branches of zemstvo work, we shall make no attempt to distinguish between the zemstvos and the local organs of the Zemstvo Union.

We shall commence our account of the combined work of the zemstvos and their Union with their activities in the organization and relief of the population in the interior of Russia, after which we shall consider the development of the Union's activities in the war zone.

CHAPTER VI

RELIEF OF SICK AND WOUNDED SOLDIERS

Evacuation.

At the beginning of August, 1914, the War Department turned to the Zemstvo Union for assistance in the following task. The number of sick and wounded soldiers expected each month was about 200,000. Their transport from the front was to be carried out by five clearing stations: Petrograd (60,000), Moscow (84,000), Kursk (8,000), Orel (24,000), and Kharkov (28,000). It was necessary to consider how the prompt distribution of evacuated men all over the country should be organized. At the end of August, the serious fighting in Galicia clearly demonstrated that there might be as many as 280,000 casualties a month requiring evacuation from the front.

The plan of the Zemstvo Union, prepared in conformity with this request of the Ministry of War, was as follows: clearing hospitals were to be established in the above-named cities, in which the evacuated soldiers were to be classified and given the most indispensable medical aid. The stay of a patient at a clearing hospital was to last an average of three days and in no case more than ten. Allowing, for the sake of safety, for a maximum figure of ten, it was necessary to provide accommodation at the clearing hospitals for at least one-third of the total monthly quota of sick and wounded soldiers that might arrive at these points. From the hospitals they were to be transferred to the so-called "circuit" hospitals. The time allowed each patient in such hospitals was about three weeks. This estimate determined the number of beds needed both at the clearing hospitals and in the "circuits," that is to say, those provinces that were assigned to serve each clearing hospital.[1]

The military authorities thought themselves capable of assuming the whole burden of organizing the clearing hospitals, but were of opinion that in the "circuits" they would be able to maintain only part of the necessary hospital beds; all the rest were left to the care

[1] The Petrograd circuit comprised six provinces and Finland; the Moscow circuit, fifteen provinces; the Orel circuit, five; Kursk, two; Kharkov, two.

of the city councils of Petrograd and Moscow and to the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. The latter two organizations were to provide 155,400 beds.

The Zemstvo Union unhesitatingly assumed two-thirds of the entire burden, while the Union of Towns undertook the remainder. The general organization was discussed jointly by both bodies. The capacity of each province was determined in accordance with its geographical situation in relation to the clearing hospital, by taking into account its facilities for communication, such as roads, etc., and the number of cities and towns. By a telegram of August 31, 1914, the provincial zemstvos were informed of the number of beds to be provided in their respective provinces. The actual work on the spot, however, had already begun early in August. For the first six months this work is expressed in the following figures:

Number of Beds Maintained by the Zemstvo Union.

Dates	*Interior area*	*Front area*	*Total*
1914 August 15	7,141	4,734	11,875
September 1	51,776	7,912	59,688
October 1	103,635	15,319	118,954
November 1	126,126	22,692	148,818
December 1	131,276	22,452	153,728
1915 January 1	139,649	24,793	164,442
February 1	143,829	27,693	171,519

The organization was subjected to a severe test during the first six months: nevertheless zemstvo hospitals were overcrowded only once, and this before a regular evacuation plan could be worked out, namely, at the end of August, and in the beginning of September, as a result of the severe fighting in Galicia.[2]

We have already seen that the number of beds maintained by the Zemstvo Union continued after this to increase uninterruptedly, reaching the number of nearly 200,000 in the second half of 1916. The report of the Zemstvo Union for the first eighteen months of the War, noting the fact that there were 173,000 zemstvo beds in existence on January 1, 1916, states:

On the whole, so far as the number of beds furnished is concerned,

[2] *Obzor Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*) of the Work of the Central Committee of the Union of Zemstvos from August 1, 1914, to February 1, 1915, pp. 34-61.

the Zemstvo Union ranks first among the institutions caring for the sick and wounded soldiers, since the Ministry of War has furnished about 160,000 beds, the city of Moscow about 75,000, the Union of Towns about 70,000, and the Red Cross about 48,000.[3]

The great increase in the number of hospital beds was due to the restricted number of clearing hospitals established by the military authorities. In spite of the fact that Unions of Zemstvos and Towns came to the aid of the Ministry of War in organizing not only the five clearing hospitals mentioned above, but also two more besides (Ekaterinoslav and Rostov), the total number of beds in the seven clearing hospitals was only 15,000. It is true that, in actual practice, the sick and wounded stayed at these clearing hospitals an average of only three instead of the expected ten days; however, instead of receiving a real treatment, they were merely registered, and their wounds dressed, while their underwear and clothing was being disinfected. With the rapid evacuation of patients, the clearing hospitals were thus enabled to deal with all arrivals, but the heavy stream of patients to the interior demanded a correspondingly larger number of hospitals which would receive them.

The evacuations of the first few months brought home to the Zemstvo Union the fact that it was impracticable to keep up a strict system of attaching entire provinces to a certain clearing hospital, since parts of some provinces might be reached more easily by some other clearing hospitals. Thus, for instance, the district towns of Kashira and Venev in the province of Tula, attached to the clearing hospital of Orel, are 102 and 165 versts respectively by rail from Moscow, while trains from Orel have to cover 425 versts to Kashira and 488 versts to Venev. Practical experience of this kind stimulated the Zemstvo Union to consider the possibility of a radical revision of the entire system of evacuation so as to redistribute the evacuation areas according to the convenience of railway communication.

Such a revision of the original plan was soon made, and, after the matter had been discussed with the representatives of the Union of Towns, the new evacuation scheme was laid before the general staff. On December 20, 1914, the Ministry of War gave its approval to the new plan. Under this plan the Ministry assigned a certain num-

[3] *Kratki Ocherk Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*), Moscow, 1916, p. 11.

ber of trains to each clearing hospital. As this number, however, was far from satisfying the actual requirements, the result was that the stream of evacuation was soon blocked and the Zemstvo Union was compelled to carry on a vigorous campaign for an increase in the number of trains serving the clearing hospitals. The results of this campaign were that the number of these trains for Moscow increased from fourteen in September to thirty-one in December; for Kharkov, from three to seven in the same period; and at Petrograd, from none to twelve.

The stream of sick and wounded soldiers flowing into the clearing hospitals fluctuated greatly. There was a very sharp rise in the spring and summer of 1915, the period of severe fighting and of the great retreat of the Russian army. The evacuation of a large number of hospitals operating in the war zone (Warsaw, Riga, Kovno, Grodno, Brest, and Mitau) became necessary. As a rule, about one-fourth of all the sick and wounded were given first aid and other attention in the vicinity of the front and were not subject to further evacuation to the rear. When the hospitals close to the front had to be removed, the whole mass of sick and wounded soldiers had to be directed to the clearing hospitals. The new crisis was overcome more or less successfully, but it required a speedy increase in the number of beds in the interior provinces and another change in the plan of evacuation. This work was done once more by the Zemstvo Union. It was found necessary to open additional hospitals with a capacity of 69,000 beds, for which purpose the hospitals which had been transferred to the interior were chiefly utilized. The scheme was approved by the General Staff, but the figures proposed by the Central Committee of the Union were somewhat reduced.

At this time steps had moreover to be taken to shift to the interior the hospitals of the Union from the provinces of Kiev, Volhynia, Podolia, Vitebsk, and Minsk, with a total of about 3,500 beds. Accommodation was found for them at Rostov and Voronezh. However, the halt in the German offensive made it unnecessary to complete the transfer, so that only a very few zemstvo hospitals (Baranovichy, Rezhitsa, and Proskurov) were moved from the vicinity of the front farther into the interior. In the winter there was a lull in the evacuation work. Upon the whole, it may be said that the number of casualties dealt with by the clearing hospitals in the

course of 1915 did not exceed the estimate of the Ministry of War made in August, 1914. On the other hand, the work accomplished by the several clearing hospitals, when taken separately, was far from what had been expected, as will be seen from the following figures, which show the percentages of the total number of sick and wounded distributed among the four principal evacuation centers:

Evacuation in 1915.

	Estimates of War Department	*Actually registered in 1915*
	(*percentage*)	
Petrograd	29.5	18.1
Moscow	41.2	57.1
Kursk	3.9	7.3
Kharkov	13.7	10.3
Other centers	11.7	7.2
	100	100

These figures also show the relative importance of the four principal clearing hospitals.

The comparative lull in the stream of casualties during the winter campaign of 1915-1916 brought up the question of closing some of the zemstvo hospitals, which had been standing idle for months. Many of the local committees had repeatedly applied to the Central Committee for permission to close such hospitals, but invariably received a negative reply. Having assumed the obligation of maintaining hospital facilities of a definite capacity, the Central Committee felt that it was bound to hold itself ready for any possible emergency.[4]

At about the same time the Zemstvo Union was confronted with another serious problem in connection with the evacuation of the wounded. The military medical authorities were anxious to utilize for the purpose of evacuation those military hospitals which had been removed from the war zone to the interior and which afforded a capacity of 40,000 beds. At this time it was impossible to find accommodation for such a vast number of hospital beds, so that the only solution of the problem seemed to be a speedy construction of new hospitals. But this certainly was not the moment to think of

[4] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Central Committee, Nos. 35-36, pp. 46-52.

undertaking so enormous a task. A conference was held with the head of the medical department of the army, at which it was unanimously decided that the assistance of the Zemstvo Union should be enlisted. The telegram dispatched in this connection by the Ministry of War included the following sentence: "Prompted by the consideration that this Union has extended its activities throughout the interior with such success, we feel that it possesses the best and most adequate means and resources to undertake the construction of the above-mentioned hospitals."

The building season was coming to an end and the transport of building material by rail was extremely difficult. Nor was it possible everywhere to purchase suitable sites for the hospitals, while compulsory expropriation would have involved complicated formalities. In spite of these obstacles, the Zemstvo Union, having communicated with its local committees, undertook this work also, stipulating merely that the Government should assist it in the conveyance of the requisite materials and in obtaining the necessary sites. The Government accepted these terms, the local committees proceeded to buy the building materials, and work was started in many places. According to the estimates, the cost of one bed varied from three hundred to seven hundred rubles and the length of time required to complete the buildings from two to four months.

The Government, nevertheless, found itself unable to deliver all the materials and to obtain the sites. The result was that the zemstvos were freed from some of the obligations they had assumed, the more so as the termination of the German offensive made the whole enterprise far less urgent than it had been. Still, by March and April, 1915, substantial, heated hospital barracks with a capacity of 24,480 beds had been built. This work was shared by the following provincial zemstvos: Vladimir, Saratov, Kostroma, Nizhni-Novgorod, Perm, Poltava, Samara, Simbirsk, Tambov, Ufa, and Kharkov. In the Don and Kuban territories such barracks were constructed by the Rostov committee of the Union.

From September, 1915, to about the latter part of December of that year, there was a complete standstill in hostilities on all Russian fronts, interrupted only by minor clashes in the Riga-Dvinsk sector, which could not in any way affect the work of the clearing hospitals. But at the end of December there were almost simultane-

ously two offensives of the Russian armies—at Czernovitsy and Erzerum. Kharkov and Tiflis were the only points which now felt the increased stream of casualties, and the Tiflis clearing hospital was at this time subjected to the strain of an unprecedented number of sick rather than of wounded.[5]

In February, 1916, it was decided to launch a partial offensive in the region of Lake Naroch. The immediate rear, as has been stated previously, had been deprived of some of the large hospitals, evacuated to the interior during the last great retreat. In view of the expected renewed influx of large numbers of sick and wounded, it was proposed to the Zemstvo Union that it should equip all along the front a number of receiving stations. This order was executed within one month, and huts accommodating 40,000 patients were soon erected on the northern and western fronts.

Notwithstanding these preparations, the evacuation of casualties during the spring battles of 1916 did not proceed very smoothly. The question was again raised of bringing about better coördination between the evacuation at the front and in the rear. The movement of the sick and wounded from the clearing hospitals was being carried out with more or less order and system because the two unions, having at their disposal telegraphic information as to the number of vacant beds in the hospitals of the interior, were able promptly to overcome difficulties that might accidentally arise. But the Zemstvo Union had no influence whatever over the evacuation from the front to the clearing hospitals, and all its efforts to establish some kind of a working agreement with the evacuation authorities at the front were invariably defeated. In the meantime, the administration of military communications at the front paid not the slightest attention to the capacity of the clearing hospitals, but merely reckoned with the number of trains that might be dispatched to those points. In particular, in the spring of 1916, they ordered the dispatch of six trains a day to Orel, nine to Petrograd, and only five to Moscow, whereas the relative capacity of these clearing stations was altogether different.

At conferences held in the beginning of May, 1916, the two Unions again urged upon the authorities the need of increasing the accommodation in the hospitals of the interior, in view of the expected

[5] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Central Committee, Nos. 37-38, pp. 26-29.

summer campaign. As a large number of beds stood idle at this time, however, a conference between the Unions and Prince Oldenburg decided that there was no need to increase the number of beds. Nevertheless the Zemstvo Union informed its provincial committees that in view of the magnitude of the contemplated military operations it had resolved to take prompt measures for enlarging the hospital capacity so as to be prepared for any emergency.

On May 22, 1916, General Brusilov launched his offensive at Lutsk, and the result was that not only were the southern areas soon overflowing with wounded, but a considerable number of these had to be sent even as far as Moscow. After June 20, when the Russians advanced in the Baranovichy sector, it became evident that the entire hospital organization would soon be swamped. Then, at the end of June, more conferences were held with the evacuation authorities, and the result was that the unions were asked to increase their hospital facilities by 50,000 beds, and to be ready to provide an additional 50,000, if necessary. Of course, it was impossible to carry out such an enormous task within so short a time, since there were neither sufficient accommodation nor sufficient supplies and equipment available.

Meanwhile, from about August 20, 1916, Tiflis was also receiving a steady stream of casualties (2,000 to 3,000 a day). About the same time, the entry of Rumania on the side of the Allies made it necessary also to provide the new front with adequate hospital facilities. On the whole, it may be said that the strain imposed upon the evacuation machinery in the summer of 1916, was higher than at any other period of the War. From May to September the Zemstvo Union was able to increase the number of hospital beds in the interior by 20,000 and was preparing for further increases. In addition to this, with the appearance of casualties from the Rumanian front, the number of beds attached to the clearing hospitals in the south also had to be increased by 10,000, at the urgent request of the general staff.

It would have been scarcely possible to make timely provision for these various needs on the vast scale that was required had it not been for two circumstances which helped matters in 1916. The first was that a portion of the huts built by the zemstvos in the interior had never been utilized by the military authorities, and the Zemstvo

Union was now given permission to use these for its new hospitals. In the second place, permission was given at the beginning of May to send convalescent soldiers to their homes on short furloughs. The latter measure, no doubt, involved a good deal of additional trouble. The exact terms of these furloughs were not known on the spot, so that the hospitals were unable to tell precisely what class of patients would be entitled to them, for how long, and who should provide the men with transport, clothing, and money. To clear up these questions, the Zemstvo Union negotiated with the military authorities, and assumed a number of obligations in connection with furloughs for all those whose state of health permitted of their discharge from hospital. In July, 1916, all formal and technical difficulties were at last removed. The extensive application of this measure made available a large number of hospital beds and enabled the Zemstvo Union to discharge its duties in this connection successfully during the exceedingly difficult period of the summer of 1916.

A Statistical Illustration.

In 1920 a "Commission for the Investigation of the Effects on Public Health of the War of 1914-1920" was formed at Moscow, composed of medical men and statisticians. This commission in 1923 published its first report.[6] The volume discusses the question of the composition and casualties of the Russian army in the World War. The investigation is far from complete, and the vast array of figures that the volume contains represents merely a preliminary summary of official data, many of which are conflicting. The work on the army archives and card indexes has only begun. Nevertheless, even these preliminary figures permit us to perceive the general trend of a very large number of interesting phenomena in this field; we find among these figures some referring to the evacuation of the sick and wounded. According to reports of the general staff and General Headquarters up to October, 1917, that is, for the thirty-eight months of Russia's participation in the War, the total number of evacuations to the interior of the country was 1,425,000 sick and 2,875,000 wounded. This makes a total of 4,300,000 men, or an average of 113,157 per month for the entire period. This move-

[6] *Trudi* (*Report*) of the Commission for the Investigation of the Effects on Public Health of the War of 1914-1920, Moscow, 1923.

ment did not proceed at an even pace, for in certain months of 1916 the monthly average mounted to nearly 300,000. Our data for the various clearing hospitals end with September, 1916. But in the table below will be found figures showing that in 1917 the army likewise continued to send back to the interior vast numbers of sick and wounded soldiers. In particular, during the first few months following the Revolution (March, April, May, 1917), we observe even a heavy excess over the average in this unfortunate stream of sick and wounded.

Evacuated from the Front Area.

1917:	*Officers*	*Non-commissioned officers and men*	*Total*
January	1,713	144,447	146,160
February	1,769	145,995	147,764
March	2,037	170,006	172,043
April	2,055	204,875	206,930
May	2,216	256,442	258,658

We thus find for this period a monthly average of 186,000 patients evacuated to the rear. Of those evacuated, only about 50 per cent were able to return to the front (about 90 per cent of the officers). Fatal issues in the hospitals were comparatively few, as we shall see presently. We must, therefore, assume that the majority of casualties belong to the category of permanently disabled and of patients so seriously affected as to require lengthy treatment in special hospitals, or long furloughs for recuperation.

The normal percentage of sick and wounded soldiers not evacuated to the rear and treated in the hospitals of the war zone or in the immediate vicinity has been calculated at twenty-five. This class of patients was made up either of very serious cases whose further transport might involve fatal complications, or of very light cases expected to return to the front at an early date. If we study the data supplied by the Chief Medical Inspector concerning the period from the outbreak of the War to October, 1916,[7] we shall find that they account for a grand total of 5,618,454 sick and wounded, of whom 3,952,875 were evacuated to the hospitals in the interior, making 70.3 per cent, while the remaining 29.7 per cent were

[7] *Trudi* (*Report*) of the Commission for the Investigation of the Effects on Public Health of the War of 1914-1920, Moscow, 1923, pp. 162-163.

treated at the hospitals of the front. The proportion, however, as between sick and wounded appears to be very different. Altogether, the Chief Medical Inspector has accounted for 2,650,817 sick soldiers up to October, 1916, of whom 1,477,940, that is, 55.7 per cent, were evacuated to the interior and the remaining 44.3 per cent were left for treatment in the war zone. In the case of the wounded, however, it was otherwise. Here we find that, out of a total of 2,967,637, there were evacuated to the interior 2,474,935, that is, 83.3 per cent, leaving, consequently, for treatment at the front hospitals only 16.7 per cent. These ratios it is important to bear in mind, in comparing the number of sick and wounded cared for at the hospitals in the interior.

War-Time Hospitals.

Altogether, the Zemstvo Union established 3,222 hospitals. A considerable number of these, namely 2,267, with a capacity of 134,994 beds, have been described in great detail by the evacuation department of the Central Committee.[8] This makes it possible for us to discuss certain features of their organization.

The greatest activity in opening new hospitals falls within the first months of the War. In August, 1914, one-fifth of all hospitals were opened, in September, one-third, and in October, again, one-fifth. This feverish activity of the Zemstvo Union was frequently due to extreme urgency. Thus, for instance, on August 20 and 21, just as the local committee of the Union had started the work of organizing hospitals, 3,000 wounded men arrived at Kaluga, and this not from Moscow, as had been expected, in accordance with the regular evacuation schedules, but direct from the army at the front. From Vladimir the chairman of the local committee wired to Moscow: "No vacant beds in Vladimir. Everything crowded. Not enough doctors. I request three days to provide accommodation for the wounded in the district." From Ryazan the chairman of the provincial zemstvo board reported: "No beds vacant."

The frequently unforeseen arrival of patients, and the very possibility of such unexpected arrivals, naturally tended to stimulate the zemstvo to abnormal efforts. It must be said, however, that even without this stimulus the work was everywhere done with extraor-

[8] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Central Committee, Nos. 25-26, pp. 35-38.

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dinary energy and willingness. In the early days the general conditions of work were anything but favorable. Thus we read in a report from the Kazan committee: "During the first period of our work, scarcity was experienced practically in everything—medical staffs, medical supplies, hospital equipment, and accommodation. It was possible to overcome these difficulties only because of the keen sense of patriotism of the population at large and because of extensive public initiative." Similar reports were received from every direction.

There was particular difficulty in finding suitable premises for hospitals. The zemstvos, it is true, had their own regular hospitals. In the majority of cases, however, these were found barely sufficient to satisfy the daily needs of the civilian population and, moreover, most of these hospitals were situated in the villages at a great distance from the railways, which would have made the transfer of the wounded soldiers to these institutions extremely difficult. Nevertheless, a certain portion of these hospitals, mainly in the chief towns of a district or province, were set apart for military patients. Of 2,267 hospitals described above, with a total capacity of 134,994 beds, 551 hospitals with 16,655 beds represented mere divisions or wards in zemstvo hospitals already existing, and it was necessary, for the remaining hospitals, namely, 1,729, with 118,339 beds, to find suitable premises without delay and adapt them to the new requirements. The zemstvo committees thereupon issued appeals to the population; local quarrels were put aside and institutions and organizations that had been either opposing or competing with each other now unanimously rallied to the support of the zemstvos. At Orel, for example, we find participating in the establishment of new zemstvo hospitals such institutions as the military academy, department of post and telegraph, the Volunteer Firemen's Association, coöperative banks, and others. In Kiev, the zemstvo was joined by the entire corporation of local officials of the Ministry of Finance, while the Society of Arts and Letters coöperated with it in setting up the new hospitals. Premises were put at the disposal of the zemstvos by government institutions, the clergy (sometimes in monasteries and convents), charitable and cultural organizations, societies, clubs, and private individuals. In Penza there was established a "civic committee" of 150 members to visit residences and see whether

it was possible to turn them into accommodation for the wounded. Many societies, coöperative organizations, etc., as well as private individuals, declared themselves ready to furnish the zemstvos not only with hospital buildings, but even to equip them completely and sometimes even to defray all costs of maintenance. Everywhere we find women's organizations springing up spontaneously to sew bed linen and underwear and serve in the hospitals.

The feeling of sympathy with the sick and wounded was manifested not only by the educated classes, who might naturally be expected to respond quickly, but also by the peasantry.

In the province of Moscow instances were noted of peasants bringing to the hospitals cart loads of cabbages, potatoes, and other vegetables, as their contribution to the welfare of the wounded. In the province of Kaluga the peasants collected among themselves and presented for the benefit of the wounded thousands of yards of homespun linen. In the province of Novgorod the hospitals received from the peasants gifts for the wounded consisting of various articles, down to soap, buttons, thread, needles, etc. In the province of Orel, the peasants of the village of Lavrovo subscribed the sum of 6,000 rubles for a hospital to be maintained in their own name. In the volost of Tregubovo (district of Dukhovschinsk, province of Smolensk) there was opened at the outbreak of the War a hospital with twenty-two beds, equipped and maintained at the expense of the taxpayers of that volost, who for this purpose assessed themselves to a special tax, on the basis that landlords were to pay 2½ copecks a month on each deciatine of land, while the peasants were taxed 2 copecks. In the provinces in which the manufacturing industries were represented, for example, Kostroma, Vladimir, Yaroslav, and Moscow, one would often come across hospitals organized by the combined efforts of the workers and manufacturers. In the provinces of Ekaterinoslav and Kharkov a majority of the private hospitals were equipped at the expense of the owners, employees, and miners in the mining industry. One-third of all the hospitals opened under the zemstvo auspices were created exclusively at private expense. Most of these were only small hospitals, averaging twenty-five beds, in rural localities, and less frequently in the cities. The remaining two-thirds of such hospitals were larger. They were opened and maintained with funds provided

by the Zemstvo Union, local zemstvos, or sometimes at the joint expense of the two. If we take all the hospitals established by the Zemstvo Union, irrespective of their means of support, we find the largest number in rural districts, a smaller number in the district towns and fewest of all in the chief towns of the provinces. However, the provincial hospitals were larger, with an average of 106 beds; next came the district hospitals, averaging 74.3 beds; and the smallest were the rural hospitals, where the average number of beds was 43. Accordingly, the total number of beds maintained by the zemstvos in the chief towns of the provinces will be found much larger than in the district towns or rural localities. The exact figures covering 1,729 hospitals opened during the War were as follows:

Distribution of War-Time Zemstvo Hospitals.

	Number of hospitals	*Percentage of total number of hospitals*	*Number of beds*	*Percentage of total number of beds*	*Average number of beds per hospital*
Provincial towns	453	26.2	48,087	40.2	106.0
District towns	492	28.5	36,531	30.9	74.3
Rural localities	784	45.3	33,721	28.9	43.0
Total	1,729	100.0	118,339	100.0	68.4

At the outset it was expected that the hospitals would be maintained by the organizations providing the money for their equipment. As the War dragged on, however, many organizations, private persons, and even local zemstvos began to find the financial burden unbearable and were forced to seek the aid of the Zemstvo Union. In the second year of the War 88 per cent of all zemstvo hospital beds were already being maintained either entirely or in part with funds received by the Union from the Government.

Most of the hospitals opened by the zemstvos in the chief towns of the province or district were not far away from the railway stations; as a rule, not more than two miles distant. In the rural localities, however, about one-half of all the hospitals were at a considerable distance from the stations, at times even as much as twenty miles. In these cases the transfer of the sick and wounded was greatly complicated, especially since so many of these hospitals could be reached only by very bad country roads which became im-

passable in rainy weather. The result was that there was always a certain number of hospitals to which patients either never came or only in extraordinary circumstances, and such hospitals were gradually closed down. Altogether, 312 zemstvo hospitals, mostly small ones, were closed, for this and similar reasons, up to July 1, 1915.

In the chief towns of the province the zemstvo hospitals were able to organize the conveyance of sick and wounded soldiers from the railway stations in a thoroughly efficient manner. For this purpose, street cars, automobiles, and other vehicles were quickly put to use. In many cases owners of motor cars placed them at the disposal of the zemstvos on their own initiative on the days when the convoys of wounded arrived. In some of the cities the cabmen refused to accept payment for carrying the wounded and sick soldiers to the hospitals. In the district towns the situation was much less favorable, but it was at its worst in the rural localities, where the best that could be obtained in many cases was the ordinary, springless peasant cart. Yet it was precisely in these rural localities that the long distances and poor roads made comfortable means of conveyance imperative.

Patients were sent to hospitals by water also, but this mode of transport was very little resorted to. Thus, during the summer of 1915, 42,500 men were conveyed by water in twenty-two provinces. Of these, 0.93 per cent on the Vologda and Sukhona rivers, 29.18 per cent on the Volga, 4.8 per cent on the Oka, 8.69 per cent on the Kama, 0.27 per cent on the Tsna, 2.13 per cent on the Don, 53.94 per cent on the Dnieper, and 0.06 per cent on the Black Sea, from Kherson to Odessa. This method of transport could be utilized only during the brief navigation season. However, the long, quiet journey on the water proved beneficial to the health of certain classes of patients, in particular of those suffering from the effects of poison gas and from other respiratory ailments, and the zemstvo committees were only too eager to avail themselves of these routes.

One of the greatest difficulties to be contended with in opening such a large number of hospitals was that of finding sufficient medical staffs, nurses, and orderlies. The mobilizations had sent to the front many doctors and junior medical officers of whom at best there had never been enough. Many zemstvos had to appeal for help in this emergency to the Central Committee in Moscow. Here, a special

department for medical personnel had been organized within a few months from the outbreak of the War, and training classes had been opened for the lower hospital staffs and attendants. But even those persons with medical training who were not mobilized preferred to seek service in the front organizations of the Zemstvo Union, so that serious difficulty was found in inducing them to work in the hospitals in the rear. Nevertheless, the Union succeeded in enlisting more than 37,000 men and women for the hospitals in the interior as follows: 5,000 physicians and surgeons, 6,600 junior medical officers, 7,900 nurses, and 17,900 attendants and various employees. On an average, each doctor had to attend to 39.1 cases and each junior officer to 29.

Under the original plans, 37 per cent of all zemstvo hospital beds were to be devoted to major surgical cases, 33 per cent to minor surgical cases and the sick, and the remaining 30 per cent to the so-called "patronage" cases, that is convalescents and light cases requiring rest and richer diet under doctors' orders. Actually, however, these plans were never fully realized. Prince Oldenburg looked askance upon the institution of "patronage" and ordered this medical service to be discontinued. In its place, the so-called "convalescent battalions," were established. In these battalions the primary consideration was not doctors' orders, rest, and richer food, but rather discipline and encouragement of the patients to return to the front.

As a result of these arrangements and of the experience gained during the first few months of the War, the zemstvo hospitals actually had only 23.1 per cent of their bed capacity devoted to major surgical cases on July 1, 1915. Even if we were to add to this number the beds not accounted for in the reports of the hospitals, bearing in mind that it is always possible to accommodate serious cases in beds intended for minor surgery, it would give only 35.6 per cent of the total for beds devoted to major surgery. For minor surgery and for the sick, 53.7 per cent of the total bed capacity was set aside, leaving for "patronage" cases not more than 5 per cent, 3.6 per cent for contagious diseases, and 2.1 per cent for special cases, such as mental and nervous disorders, tuberculosis, balneological cases, etc.

The degree of utilization varied according to the location and

purpose of the zemstvo hospitals, and also according to the season of the year. The greatest use was made of hospitals for special treatments, while the general hospitals were less crowded. During the first few months of the War about 50 per cent of the beds were unoccupied, although, of course, this does not preclude the possibility of hospitals in some localities having been fully occupied. Later the average percentage of beds occupied in the zemstvo hospitals throughout the country rose to 70 and in certain places to as much as 77 per cent.[9] In the summer of 1916 the percentage rose to 85. Even in provinces as remote from the battlefields as Vyatka or Perm, where the average percentage of occupied beds usually fluctuated between 50 and 55, there were short periods during which all hospitals were crowded.

[9] The following table may serve as an illustration:

Percentage of Beds Occupied during the First Six Months of the War.

Dates	*Number of beds*	*Occupied*	*Percentage of occupation*
1914 October 1	89,241	43,708	49
October 15	93,846	47,838	51
November 1	103,621	66,950	65
December 1	106,853	74,970	70
December 15	111,702	83,500	75
1915 January 1	114,731	83,458	73
January 15	127,991	87,034	68
February 1	129,991	80,654	62

Percentage of Beds Occupied during the First Eleven Months of the War, in Nine Provinces.

Province	*Number of beds*	*Number of occupied bed-days*	*Percentage of beds occupied*
Ekaterinoslav	5,016	331,596	75.2
Kharkov	8,486	1,651,524	75.1
Nizhni-Novgorod	3,307	494,198	72.3
Novgorod	2,350	394,116	67.6
Petrograd	4,397	673,456	67.5
Tula	3,082	325,420	53.5
Vologda	1,470	106,100	52.8
Orel	6,591	802,588	47.4
Terek Territory	5,427	261,378	38.8

From the front, the patient was sent to the clearing hospitals, which were nominally under the absolute control of the army authorities. In practice, however, most of them were equipped by the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns and soon passed under the control of the latter.

A description of the organization and methods of its clearing hospital was given by the Kharkov provincial committee of the Zemstvo Union in a report from which we quote the following:

At the request of the provincial zemstvo board, the administration of the Southern Railways set aside spacious quarters for a clearing hospital in a building near the station. Subsequently all evacuation work was concentrated at this place, to which all the wounded and sick soldiers arriving from the front are taken straight from the station. After they have had their hair cut they are given a bath. Their clothing is sent to a disinfecting chamber, where steam and formaldehyde are applied. In the dressing-room the patients are provided with clean underwear and sent to the wards. They are then examined by the physicians, their wounds dressed, fed, registered in accordance with the nature of their ailment and according to birthplace, and then distributed among the hospitals of the city and province of Kharkov or other provinces.

At first the patients were kept at the clearing hospital for a short time only, just long enough to enable them to bathe and have their wounds dressed, and to enter them in the registers, which usually required about 24 hours or less. Later, in order to register the patients in a more careful manner, according to the nature of their ailments, and in order to have a better opportunity of intercepting infectious cases, the time of their stay at the clearing hospital was increased to 48 hours. In spite of its vast space, with accommodation for 923 patients, the hospital was found inadequate. The zemstvo therefore opened an additional clearing hospital with 400 beds in what used to be a liquor warehouse. The second hospital is likewise provided with a bath-house, disinfecting chamber, and dental clinic. A special branch of the street car line has been built to the new institution. At the first hospital, which acts as headquarters, an information bureau has been established where all the information necessary for evacuation is concentrated (the number of free and occupied beds in the hospitals, the number of patients arriving and departing by train, etc.). Upon arrival of the patients at the hospital, the information bureau enters each case in alphabetical order and later the destination of the patient is noted in the proper place. The bureau also writes letters for the pa-

tients upon request and furnishes information concerning the most suitable place for their further treatment. . . .

Alongside the railroad platform, the zemstvo has erected two large, heated buildings which serve as an isolation hospital for men suspected of or actually suffering from infectious disease, as well as a rest-room for those to be entrained for other destinations or for those entering the clearing hospitals. They were also provided with a canteen and a dressing station.[10]

The patient usually stayed at the zemstvo hospitals long enough to be completely restored to health or until he was transferred to a special hospital if he needed special treatment. The original calculations, as stated above, were based upon the assumption that the average stay of the patient at the hospital would be about three weeks. It appeared from experience that these computations were correct.[11] This, of course, was not an absolute rule; on the contrary, very frequently the average stay of the patient is found to be much longer. Thus, at the zemstvo hospitals in the city of Tver, it was 41.3 days; in the hospital at Eupatoria, 43.6 days; and at Orel, 56.1 days. In the hospitals of the Moscow provincial committee of the Union, patients were kept even longer.

The medical division of the provincial zemstvo board of Moscow carried out a further statistical analysis of the data regarding sick and wounded soldiers receiving treatment at the hospitals of the Zemstvo Union in the province of Moscow. This analysis furnished material for certain conclusions which were later used not only by the Zemstvo Union, but also by the Union of Towns. One of the first things worked out by this department was information regarding the transfer and discharge of sick and wounded soldiers from 28 hospitals during the first few months of the War, totaling 4,430 cases. The results obtained were as follows:

By the end of the third month, 42.9 per cent had been evacuated from the hospitals by discharge, while 31.5 per cent were accounted

[10] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Central Committee, No. 11, pp. 65-66.

[11] The average number of days spent by the patients in the hospitals was as follows: Rzhev, 21.2 days; Lebedin, 20; Chelyabinsk, 19.4; Smolensk, 31.8; Astrakhan, 37.8; a computation based upon 24,000 cases gives the following averages: City of Kaluga, 29.1 days; Kazan province, 27.2; Orel province, 21.25; these data are taken from reports published in various issues of the *Bulletin.*

for by transfers to other institutions (special) for further treatment, thus making a total of 74.4 per cent. In the first month, there were evacuated 6.6 per cent plus 13 per cent, which makes 19.6 per cent of all admissions. In the second month the respective figures were 20.7 per cent plus 15.2 per cent, making 35.9 per cent. In the third month we find 15.6 per cent plus 3.3 per cent, totalling 18.9 per cent. In the fourth month a considerable residue is formed, which shows a tendency to tarry in the hospitals rather long and makes up one fourth part of all admissions.[12]

In the zemstvo hospitals the patient found himself surrounded by an atmosphere of sympathetic care, so much so that it even provoked protests by the army authorities; the head of the army medical department in his orders on more than one occasion thought it necessary to remind the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns that they were dealing not merely with patients, but with soldiers who were expected to return to the army, for which reason the *régime* and discipline in the hospitals should be similar to what they were in the army. However, little attention was paid to orders of this kind, particularly during the first year of the War. It is true, the "regulation" diet, though nutritious, was very modest. As a general rule, the patients were given in the morning tea and half a pound of white bread; for dinner they had soup and meat, with porridge and black bread; at four o'clock they were given tea and white bread, and at seven-thirty they received supper consisting of two courses. Patients on this regulation diet were to receive only three-quarters to one pound of meat, one pound of white bread, one and one-half to two pounds of black bread, nine zolotniks[13] of sugar, and one and one-half zolotnik of tea.

Side by side with this regulation diet, however, the zemstvo hospitals made very extensive use of dieting "by special prescription of the doctor," with the result that we find on the menu of various hospitals such comparative luxuries as boiled milk, milk porridge, eggs, cutlets, and fruit jellies. Not only were most of the zemstvo physicians inclined to allow their patients all kinds of privileges, but in addition the patients were surrounded by the tender care of patrons and patronesses and women's committees, whose members kept unin-

[12] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 10, pp. 59-60.

[13] One zolotnik = 0.15 ounces.

terrupted day and night watches at the hospitals, in the kitchens, and supervised the diet of the patients. These women's committees also collected donations for their charges, supplied them with tobacco, writing paper, notebooks, and other stationery and, upon discharge from the hospital, furnished them with underwear and warm clothing. The ladies on duty would read books and papers to the soldiers, write their letters to friends and relatives, arrange concerts for the convalescents, show motion pictures, and so on. The zemstvos, for their own part, saw to it that the idle hours of the patients should be usefully occupied; those who wished could receive instruction in various handicrafts and were enabled to attend lectures on general educational subjects. In some instances courses were arranged for the convalescents. Thus, the provincial zemstvo of Perm arranged in its hospitals regular courses of instruction in agriculture suitable to the northern sections of the country, and these courses, including regular discussions with expert agronomists, proved highly successful among the wounded and sick soldiers, with the result that the number of students quickly increased.

The cost of maintenance of a patient varied greatly according to time and place. During the second year of the War, but more so during the third, when there was a heavy depreciation of the ruble currency coupled with increasing difficulties in the food supply, the maintenance cost of the hospitals continually rose higher and higher, increasing by 50 to 75 per cent in some places, as compared with the original cost. In its initial estimates submitted to the Government, the Zemstvo Union allowed for modest but seemingly adequate appropriations.

The Government undertook to defray the expense of maintaining the sick and wounded in the zemstvo hospitals according to the following scale: for each occupied bed per day, 1.08 rubles (for food, 42 copecks; cooking the food, 2.67 copecks; heat, 4 copecks; light, 1 copeck; medical supplies, 30 copecks; service, 28 copecks). The cost of an unoccupied bed, per day, was set at 40 copecks.[14] During

[14] It is interesting to compare these estimates with the actual figures given for the hospitals in the city of Vyazma, province of Smolensk, during the first half of the campaign. We find here that the cost of treatment of a patient per day was: upkeep of buildings, 13.99 copecks (8.53 per cent of the total expense); wages, salaries, food and quarters of staffs, 86.35 copecks

the first eleven months of the War, a complete and detailed calculation of the actual cost of maintenance per patient was made in nine provinces, by one of the departments of the Central Committee. This calculation was made on the basis of more than 40,000 beds. The results will be found in the following table:

Daily Cost of Maintenance of Hospital Beds.

Province	*Number of beds*	*Cost of maintenance of unoccupied bed (copecks)*	*Cost of maintenance of occupied bed (copecks)*
Ekaterinoslav	5,016	62.4	118.1
Kharkov	8,486	38.0	100.8
Nizhni-Novgorod	3,307	35.1	85.3
Novgorod	2,350	54.5	108.4
Petrograd	4,397	35.0	91.0
Tula	3,082	30.5	79.7
Vologda	1,470	60.0	97.0
Orel	6,591	30.3	75.0
Terek Territory	5,427	53.9	125.1
Total	40,126	44.4	97.9

For the first year of the War, the averages do not differ materially from the tentative estimate. Later, the Government was frequently asked by the zemstvos, through the Central Committee, for an increase in the original estimate.

Description of Casualties.

A detailed description, from the purely medical standpoint, of the entire mass of sick and wounded soldiers would naturally be of profound interest. Unfortunately, no such work has been done. For this reason even the partial and somewhat casual descriptions of injuries and diseases observed in the Russian army during the War are of

(65 per cent); food for the patient, 31.86 copecks (19.42 per cent); laundry, 4.8 copecks (2.49 per cent); medicines and dressing materials, 22.03 copecks (13.43 per cent); and all other expenses, 4.07 copecks (2.48 per cent), making the total cost 1 ruble 64 copecks.

great importance. We find such details regarding various groups of patients scattered through the reports of zemstvo hospitals.

The statistical bureau of the medical division of the Moscow provincial zemstvo board made a study of different groups of soldiers undergoing treatment in the hospitals of Moscow province and promptly published the results. These data were issued with reservations, and attention was called to the fact that other groups of patients might yield different results. Still, the publications were of some benefit, as they stimulated the zemstvo physicians and surgeons to furnish in their reports uniform data. They also showed the best methods of arranging these data, and they afforded some basis for an organization of the work of the Zemstvo Union.

The first study of the zemstvo statistical bureau deals with conditions at the beginning of the War and covers 4,202 cases.

> Injuries to the upper extremities [says the report] form 52.3 per cent of all cases studied, while injuries to the lower extremities amount to 28 per cent; altogether this class of injuries accounts for 80.3 per cent. Next follow injuries to the skull, 5.8 per cent; the thorax, 4.2 per cent; the back, 4.8 per cent; the abdominal cavity, 1.4 per cent; the neck, 0.7 per cent; genital organs, 0.2 per cent. Among the injuries to the upper extremities the largest number (almost one-third) were found in the wrists and fingers, making up 31.8 per cent of the total; injuries to the shoulder and collarbone accounted for 8.8 per cent, and those of the forearm for 6.7 per cent.

It should be noted here that injuries to the left side, both in the upper and lower extremities, were found to predominate considerably.[15]

Later (April, 1915), a similar investigation was made in 10,099 cases. On the whole, this confirmed the results of the first inquiry.[16]

At the beginning of November, 1915, the Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union opened a development for the relief of disabled soldiers, which tried on broad lines to classify the fundamental groups of the prospective beneficiaries according to the nature of the relief that would be required, namely medical relief (artificial

[15] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 11, pp. 56-57.
[16] *Ibid.*, No. 16, p. 51.

limbs, sanatorium and physico-therapeutic treatments, etc.) and general relief (complete disability, with and without medical treatment, partial disability, requiring a combination of relief and suitable employment, etc.). At a meeting on January 13, 1916, the department heard a report on the results of an examination of 85,000 sick and wounded soldiers who had passed through the hospitals of Moscow province.

The sick constituted 26.5 per cent of all cases investigated, while the percentage of the wounded and shell-shocked was 73.5. Of the sick, 13 per cent were suffering from rheumatism, 6.5 per cent from frozen limbs, 3.45 per cent from tuberculosis, and 3 per cent from heart disease.

Of the total number of wounded and shell-shocked (62,500), the distribution was as follows: suffering from the injuries of the skull, 2.3 per cent; face, 1.5 per cent; jaw, 0.1 per cent; eyes, 0.4 per cent; chest, 3 per cent; abdomen, 0.4 per cent; arms, 51 per cent; legs, 35.7 per cent; shell-shocked, 2.2 per cent.

Of the skull injuries, 55.7 per cent were serious cases. Of injuries to the eye in 255 cases one eye had been lost and in 14, both eyes. Of injuries to the arms, 30.5 per cent were serious cases; in the case of injuries to the legs the ratio of serious cases was 47 per cent. Amputations of the upper extremities were 95 in number, and of the lower, 231. Of the total number of the shell-shocked, 55 per cent were serious cases.[17]

These summarized data relating to the sick and wounded requiring further care demonstrated the vast importance of the work accomplished for the proper organization of relief. However, there was still need of a more detailed analysis in order to enable the Union to draw proper conclusions. This work was accomplished by the statistical bureau of the Moscow zemstvo. Additional questions were printed on the registration cards and 132 hospitals in the province of Moscow furnished replies under the new program in regard to 4,000 patients discharged from these hospitals in December, 1915, and January, 1916.

The distribution of these patients, at the moment of arrival at the hospital, according to the nature of their wounds and diseases was as shown in the following table:

[17] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 33, pp. 40-42.

Nature of Wounds and Diseases Observed in the Cases of 4,000 Men Discharged from the Hospitals in December, 1915, and January, 1916.

Location or nature of wound or injury	*Number of Cases*	*Per cent of total*
Head	146	3.65
Neck	14	0.35
Thorax	69	1.72
Abdominal region	14	0.35
Pelvic region	57	1.42
Spine	96	2.40
Shoulder	156	3.90
Upper arm	200	5.00
Wrist and fingers	459	11.53
Hand (place not indicated)	31	0.77
Hip	203	5.06
Leg and knee	199	4.97
Heel and toes	122	3.05
Foot (place not indicated)	25	0.62
More than one part of body	222	5.54
Location not shown	61	1.52
Gas poisoning	15	0.37
Total	2,089	52.22

Nature of disease	*Number of Cases*	*Per cent of total*
Epidemic diseases	118	2.94
Tuberculosis	185	4.62
Venereal diseases	10	0.24
Other infections, non-epidemic	25	0.62
Parasites	10	0.24
Freezing	45	1.12
Other thermal injuries	12	0.30
Malnutrition	155	3.96
Nervous and mental diseases	87	2.17
Arterial diseases	85	2.12
Diseases of respiratory organs	221	5.51
Diseases of digestive organs	342	8.54
Diseases of urinal organs	21	0.52
Diseases of genital organs	19	0.47
Diseases of organs of vision	85	2.12
Diseases of auditory organs	86	2.15
Diseases of muscles, bones, and joints	261	6.52
Diseases of skin and epidermis	79	1.97
Other diseases and undiagnosed	65	1.65
Total	1,911	47.78
Grand total	4,000	100.00

These figures, in their details, may give a purely accidental view of the distribution of injuries and diseases. Other groups of patients might have presented a different picture. More interesting are the conclusions of the medical officers, based upon the data concerning these 4,000 cases, as regards the degree of disablement of the discharged patients and their need of further treatment.

Of the total number of men discharged from the hospitals 44.5 per cent were registered as able-bodied, and of these, 34.8 per cent were fully restored to health.

Those partly disabled made up 52 per cent of the total and 32.4 per cent of these gave promise of full recovery. On the whole, the first two groups, that is able-bodied men and men on their way to complete recovery, formed 76.9 per cent (44.5 and 32.4 per cent) of the total number of discharges; 19.6 per cent were partly disabled and had no hope of a complete restoration to health; 3.1 per cent of the men discharged were completely disabled. These included 1.8 per cent of incurable invalids.

Nearly one-half of all the discharges (48.3 per cent) required further treatment, either general or special. General methods of dispensary or hospital treatment (therapeutical and surgical) were required in 18 per cent of all discharged men. Special treatment was needed by not less than 30 per cent; it included physico-orthopedic treatment for 20 per cent, sanatorium treatment for 5 per cent, and balneological treatment for 4 per cent.

Non-medical relief in the form of homes and asylums for the disabled, instruction in handicrafts, etc., would probably be required by 15 per cent of all discharges, of whom about 2 per cent were incurables. The requirement in artificial limbs would be about 2 per cent of all cases.[18]

The Campaign against Epidemic Diseases.[19]

In the list given above, epidemic diseases occupy a very modest place, accounting for only about 3 per cent of the total number of

[18] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 34, pp. 47-60.

[19] Concerning the share of the Union of Towns in the fight against epidemic diseases, *see* Astrov, *The Effects of the War upon Russian Municipalities and the All-Russian Union of Towns,* Chapter X, in the volume *The War and the Russian Government* (Yale University Press, 1929) in this series of the *Economic and Social History of the World War.*

the sick and wounded. Bearing in mind, however, the fact that epidemics are the usual concomitants of war, the Zemstvo Union almost from the beginning of its activity devoted a great deal of attention to timely measures against a possible spread of epidemic diseases. Particular attention was paid to the working out of a unified scheme which would systematize and combine all private enterprise in this domain. A vast plan of this nature was completed as early as September and October, 1914, by the medical council of the Zemstvo Union.

This plan provided in the very first place for a sufficient number of beds for contagious cases to be set up in the hospitals of the Zemstvo Union and, in the second place, for the establishment of a regular network of large isolation hospitals along the routes taken by the hospital trains from the front to the clearing hospitals. These isolation hospitals, in turn, were to be relieved by transferring the patients to larger isolation hospitals in the interior of the country. The plan provided that the isolation hospitals should contain not less than 10 per cent of the total number of beds provided by the Zemstvo Union.[20] The location of the contemplated isolation hospitals was carefully discussed with the medical staff of the Union of Towns.

The plan was examined by the Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union, approved and sent out to the provincial committees of the zemstvos at the beginning of November, 1914. In most provinces the number of contagious cases was not large enough to cause alarm, and several committees (Novgorod, Vyatka, and others) even thought that there was no necessity for a separate epidemic organization, being of opinion that the isolation wards of the zemstvo hospitals would be adequate to meet present needs. From other committees came inquiries as to funds, and requests for appropriations. Here and there a beginning was made to carry the plan into effect. Lastly, in places where Turkish war-prisoners had already brought typhus in all its forms, as in Kaluga and along the Volga, the organization of isolation hospitals was taken in hand vigorously.

By February, 1915, all the zemstvos had managed to provide a total of 2,823 isolation beds instead of the 17,500 originally contemplated. In the meantime, however, disquieting reports were com-

[20] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 22-23, pp. 32-43.

ing in from the front. In some of the army units in Galicia there had been recorded cases of cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery, typhus, smallpox, etc. Thus about 2,000 cases of typhoid fever had been noted up to January 31. In the Caucasus, on the Sarakamysh sector alone, as many as 2,000 cases of infectious diseases were registered, and at Tiflis, in the military hospitals, there were 200 cases of typhus and nearly as many of recurrent typhus. On the Warsaw front, conditions were comparatively better, but Professor Tarasevich, the noted specialist sent to Warsaw by the Zemstvo Union, incessantly urged the completion without delay of the anti-epidemic organization as originally planned. In January, 1915, an increase in the number of infectious cases, as compared with the normal number observed in peace-time, was already quite noticeable. Up to the beginning of February, epidemic diseases had been discovered in 115 hospitals of the Zemstvo Union scattered over 39 different provinces; typhoid fever had been found in 107 cases, typhus in 43, and recurrent typhus in 25.

On January 25 the Central Committee subjected the original plan to a careful reëxamination, definitely approved the budget of expenditure for the campaign against epidemics, and submitted its program to the Council of Ministers. At the beginning of February, the medical forces of the Unions of Zemstvos and Towns formed a joint council which, with the consent of the Central Committees of both unions, was to take charge of the campaign as soon as the plan and the budget had been approved by the Government.

On February 17, however, it was learned that the Council of Ministers did not consider it possible to entrust the direction of work to the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. The zemstvos and municipalities received orders, through the provincial governors, to start at once the work of combating epidemics. Local measures were to be put into effect with the means at the disposal of the zemstvos and towns, but in case of need they could apply for financial assistance to the Anti-Plague Commission,[21] at whose disposal the Treasury was to place the necessary funds.

On receipt of the news that appropriations for epidemic measures

[21] A permanent, bureaucratic institution which was in existence before the War, presided over by Prince Oldenburg.

to the Central Committee of the Union had been stopped, the zemstvos were forced to apply to the Anti-Plague Commission for financial support. From this source, 5,494,598 rubles and an additional sum of 2,022,529 rubles were paid out to thirty-seven zemstvos between March 23 and June 30, 1915, for six months' expenditure on the organization of the campaign against epidemics.[22] Thus we see that the coördinated plan drafted by the Unions of Zemstvos and Towns for anti-epidemic measures had to be abandoned.

However, at the front the Zemstvo Union, at the request of the military authorities themselves, found the opportunity to wage a ceaseless campaign against epidemic diseases. Measures were taken on a large scale to provide hospitals for contagious cases; baths, laundries, canteens, tea rooms, disinfection and cleansing rooms were opened, and soldiers were supplied with clean underwear. In this connection a vigorous agitation was carried on among the higher army authorities to have the entire anti-epidemic work entrusted to the unions. Finally, on March 12, 1915, Prince Lvov received from the head of the army medical service a telegram to the following effect: "The Supreme Commander-in-Chief has informed me of the approval given by the Emperor, in principle, to the immediate utilization of the services of the Union of Zemstvos and to the provision of such monetary assistance as it may require, for the campaign against the spread of epidemics."

The first conference of authorized zemstvo representatives held at Moscow on March 12-13, 1915, adopted the following resolution on the question of epidemics:

(1) The conference is aware of the terrible danger from the spread of epidemics among the civilian population and the army. (2) It recognizes that in order to carry out successfully the measures against epidemics, these must be put in force without delay. (3) It approves the general plan of the campaign against infectious diseases proposed by the Central Committee and recognizes that its practical realization ought to be entrusted to the Union of Zemstvos and of Towns. (4) The funds necessary for anti-epidemic measures should be assigned direct by the State Treasury to the Unions. (5) In view of the fact that only by the adoption of a single coördinated plan can a full measure of suc-

[22] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 30-31, pp. 118-129.

cess be assured, it is undesirable that individual zemstvos should make application for grants to combat epidemics, independently of the Zemstvo Union.[23]

This resolution was immediately communicated to the President of the Council of Ministers. However, no progress was made and the next conference of the zemstvo representatives found it necessary on June 5 to pass the following resolution on the same question: "The conference observes that the question of the campaign against epidemics still remains unsettled, and instructs the Central Committee to take all necessary measures to enable the Zemstvo Union to undertake this work."[24]

The disasters which befell the Russian army in December, 1915, and the patriotic enthusiasm to which these gave rise in the ranks of the two unions, which had begun to supply the army with munitions of war, somewhat altered the attitude of the Government, so that the deadlock on the epidemic question was at last resolved. In its September budget, the Zemstvo Union again made provision for this work. On August 2 a government conference was held, which was attended by representatives of various departments and institutions charged with the work of combating contagious diseases. The conference agreed in principle that "all measures against the spread of contagious diseases in the army should be taken by the Union of Zemstvos and the Union of Towns, the indispensable funds to be allotted from war appropriations, but measures against the spread of epidemic diseases among the civil population should be left in the control of the local civic institutions subsidized by the Anti-Plague Commission."

This division of the work of combating epidemics between military and civil officers could never be strictly observed in practice. However, thanks to this decision, the Zemstvo Union was at last furnished with the necessary funds (6,948,600 rubles) and this, together with funds previously allotted by the Anti-Plague Commission to individual zemstvos (about 7,500,000 rubles), was enough to assure at least a partial execution of the initial program.

[23] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 11, p. 10.
[24] *Ibid.*, No. 17, pp. 18-19.

By the end of the year 1915 the zemstvos had 189 isolation hospitals with 7,707 beds. In addition, other isolation hospitals with a total capacity of 5,207 beds were under construction in eleven provinces.

During the first year of the War, that is, up to August 15, 1915, 15,325 cases of infectious diseases were registered at zemstvo hospitals; they were distributed as follows: typhus, 4,085; typhoid fever, 4,891; recurrent typhus, 2,184; diphtheria, 114; smallpox, 181; dysentery, 933; cholera, 99; anthrax, 5; erysipelas, 2,503; tetanus, 266; indeterminate typhus, 64.[25]

It should be noted here that these 15,325 cases amounted to only a little over 2 per cent of the total number of patients at the zemstvo war hospitals. In some places this rate was somewhat higher, but only on rare occasions. We have seen that among the cases discharged from the zemstvo hospitals in the province of Moscow during December, 1915, and January, 1916, there were 2.94 per cent of epidemic cases. Earlier, for the first seven months of the War, the medical bureau of the Moscow provincial zemstvo board, after examining 35,534 registry cards, noted that "cases of acute contagious forms were rare and did not amount to 1 per cent of all admissions. Together with pulmonary consumption, syphilis and other venereal diseases the contagious diseases made up not more than 2.7 per cent of the total of all admission."[26]

So far as it is possible to judge from the numerous reports published by medical organizations and institutions in the interior, the total number of contagious patients in those institutions never reached 10 per cent of all the patients, the proportion that the Zemstvo Union had cautiously provided for in its original program, and not even 5 per cent.

According to the reports of the Army Medical Board, which were published after the War by Dr. Avramov, the figures for cases of the main contagious diseases and acute scurvy among officers and men were as follows:

[25] *Ibid.*, Nos. 22-23, p. 36.
[26] *Ibid.*, No. 10, p. 59.

Number of Cases of Infectious Diseases in the Army.

Periods	*Typhoid fever*	*Typhus*	*Recurrent typhus*	*Dysentery*	*Cholera*	*Smallpox*	*Scurvy*
(August-December)							
1914	13,983	271	35	7,531	8,758	302	90
1915	56,583	4,827	4,333	14,251	20,589	1,286	770
1916	19,406	7,725	27,958	26,722	1,343	743	78,250
(January-September)							
1917	7,550	8,270	43,103	15,760	120	377	283,646
Total	97,522	21,093	75,429	64,264	30,810	2,708	362,756

In addition, 138,241 scurvy patients received treatment at the dispensaries attached to their regiments.[27]

Even if we disregard the scurvy cases, these figures will be found less favorable than those of the ratios indicated in hospital reports from the interior of the country. But we must remember that a large proportion of the sick, namely, 44.3 per cent remained in the war zone, whereas 83.3 per cent of the wounded were evacuated to the interior. It is natural, therefore, that the sick, including cases of infectious diseases, should have constituted in hospitals in the interior, a smaller percentage than in all the military hospitals of the country, both at the front and in the interior, taken together.

However, even the figures mentioned above have been considered by competent observers to be comparatively favorable. In any case, the policy of the Minister of the Interior in the matter of combating epidemics led to no tragic results.[28] It did, however, lead to extraordinary diversity in the steps taken by the zemstvos, producing a lack of coördination, unnecessary expenditure, and at times also unwarranted measures. In each province, and often in each district, large conferences would be held which decided matters as they saw fit. The reports of local committees present a picture of the most bewildering variety of anti-epidemic measures, from the construction of quite substantial buildings for isolation hospitals to the distribution of literature about the best means of combating the

[27] *Trudi* (*Proceedings*) of the Commission for the Investigation of the Effects on Public Health of the War of 1914-1920, Moscow, 1923, p. 176.

[28] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 10, p. 59.

diseases; and from the publication of instructions for the improvement of the water supply in the rural districts and for the destruction of insect pests that spread contagion to the actual organization of special epidemic detachments. We find some of the provinces (for instance, Voronezh) fully prepared to meet epidemics, while others did very little or practically nothing. There can be no doubt that the measures adopted by the zemstvos and towns were to the benefit of the population, for everything was cleaned up and put in order. However, these benefits were not everywhere commensurate with the expenditure incurred. Many of these measures, if they were to be properly carried out, would have required large expenditure and years of persistent effort; but when the funds devoted to them were so limited and everything was done in such a hurry, the results were bound to be insignificant.

In one respect, however, the zemstvos undoubtedly met with success: with the funds allotted by the Government, they built hundreds of well-equipped isolation barracks intended to be used also in peace-time as part of a network of zemstvo hospitals to be further developed. It is to be regretted that government credits, as well as appropriations by the Zemstvo Union, often came only at the close of the building season (the appropriations of the Zemstvo Union were made only in August, 1915), and the buildings were erected too late. In many places they could not be completed until the summer of 1916, and this only with heavy excess of expenditure over estimates, owing to the rising prices of materials and labor.

Zemstvo Hospitals for Special Purposes: Lunatic Asylums.

Already in July, 1914, that is even before the Zemstvo Union was organized, the Ministry of the Interior addressed a recommendation to the institutions of local government to provide a certain number of beds in their lunatic asylums for mentally deranged soldiers. The care of such patients en route from the front was left to the Red Cross Society. Early in the War the Russian Society of Psychiatrists and Neuropathologists submitted to the Zemstvo Union an elaborate plan for the evacuation and treatment of such cases. It was proposed that this work should be united under the control of the unions. A carefully worked out estimate was also presented.

Both the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns approved these recommendations and appointed a mixed commission of their own representatives and specialists on nervous diseases to put the plan into effect.

The commission got in touch with the zemstvos and obtained control of 1,045 beds set aside by the lunatic asylums in addition to those which they had previously put at the disposal of the Ministry of the Interior. But for this work, again, no credits were granted to the Zemstvo Union, under the pretext that this service had been entrusted entirely to the Red Cross. It was impossible, therefore, to realize the carefully prepared plan. Nevertheless, the care of the mentally afflicted soldiers fell mainly on the shoulders of the zemstvos. In addition to expanding the already existing zemstvo hospitals for mental cases, new ones were opened up. Such was, among others, the hospital opened on August 26, 1914, by the Moscow provincial committee of the Zemstvo Union, with a capacity of 150 beds. Very soon this hospital was compelled to perform the functions of a clearing center for the entire northwestern area. In Warsaw and Vilna the Red Cross had organized two central reception hospitals to which all mental cases from the German front were directed. From these hospitals they were transferred to the lunatic asylum of the Moscow committee of the Zemstvo Union, where they were carefully examined and, after a period of observation, conveyed in specially equipped railway cars to various zemstvo asylums.

Altogether, 540 patients passed through this hospital during the first six months of the War; within the same period there passed through all the mental institutions of Moscow about 1,300 patients, of whom about one-half were fresh recruits under observation, as well as army criminals and cases from the local garrison. About 650 soldiers were stricken in the war zone, and of these about five-sixths passed through the hospital referred to above. Thence the patients, accompanied by specially trained nurses, would be evacuated to the zemstvo asylums of Voronezh, Ryazan, Kostroma, Kursk, Tver, and Moscow. Officers constituted 15 per cent of all admissions. The asylums had usually courtyards or gardens, so that the patients were able to spend much time in the open. Under the supervision of the nurses, the patients helped to make bandages and were occupied

with easy manual labor. The hospital was considerably enlarged several times in the course of the War.[29]

Other Hospitals for Special Treatments.

After the first feverish activities in equipping a sufficient number of beds, the local zemstvo committees found that about one-third of all the sick and wounded soldiers were in need, not only of general, but also of special treatment. The work of the zemstvos now gradually tended more and more toward specialization either in hospitals already opened or in special hospitals newly created. Thus, in the city of Voronezh, on January 1, 1916, twenty zemstvo hospitals were functioning, as follows: six surgical hospitals, four mixed, one therapeutic hospital, one for infectious diseases, one for erysipelas, one for nervous disorders, and one representing a temporary home for patients awaiting evacuation. In Samara special hospitals were established for diseases of the ear, throat, and nose, and for skin and venereal diseases, as well as for nervous disorders and infectious diseases. In the province of Perm, fifty-four zemstvo hospitals were in operation on September 1, 1916, and there were also special hospitals for nervous disorders and for eye and ear diseases, as well as sanatoriums for mineral water and koumiss[30] treatment. A similar specialization in hospital treatment was carried through in the province of Ekaterinoslav and in a majority of other provinces. Particularly frequent in these reports is the mention of hospitals for nervous disorders. A typical institution of this kind was the hospital of the Voronezh zemstvo. It was opened in October, 1914, with 50 beds, but very soon increased this number to 130 and finally to 170. It was always crowded and the monthly percentage of occupied beds varied from 90 to 101. The hospital was opened in the building of the technical school and provided with steam heat, electricity, and bath rooms. Toward the close of the second week the equipment was completed and the hospital was able to operate efficiently. In the course of the year a total of 540 patients was admitted from other zemstvo hospitals to this institution, while 199 patients came from hospitals maintained by the Union of Towns, 35 admissions were from mili-

[29] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, No. 2, pp. 64-72; No. 45, pp. 13-21; No. 10, pp. 56-58.

[30] Koumiss—a fermented alcoholic drink prepared from mare's milk.

tary hospitals, and 112 from all others. The largest number of patients were suffering from injuries to the peripheral nervous system; next came those suffering from traumatic neuroses, and from wounds of the central nervous system (the brain and the spine), and finally there were cases of general nervous disorders, such as general neuroses, organic diseases of the brain and spine and of the peripheral nervous system. The overwhelming majority of patients were discharged benefited by the treatment (373), a considerable proportion were completely cured, and only 41 cases showed no improvement.[31]

Treatment for Tuberculosis.

The percentage of soldiers afflicted with tuberculosis ranged between 2 and 5 per cent of the total of all the sick and wounded soldiers. It was readily conceded that the presence of tuberculosis patients in the general hospitals was a source of danger to the others, not to mention the fact that it could not possibly benefit the sufferers themselves, who were in need of special treatment and different care and diet. This is why, on the initiative of the medical authorities of the Zemstvo Union, conferences were called as early as December, 1914, to discuss problems of treatment for tubercular patients. At the same time, practical work in the isolation of tuberculosis cases was being actively carried on by many of the zemstvos. Thus, the Moscow provincial zemstvo committee opened on the outskirts of Moscow a sanatorium for tuberculosis and proceeded to open similar institutions at various other places in the province. Similarly, we find a great deal of care and attention given to this problem in the reports of the committees from Kharkov, Penza, Nizhni-Novgorod, Tver, and elsewhere. The Central Committee, for its own part, refused to wait for any general solution of the problem and proceeded forthwith to take over at its own expense the maintenance of a considerable number of sanatorium beds equipped by the Yalta committee on the southern shore of the Crimea.

The whole question was discussed in all its aspects at a conference for combating infectious diseases which met on April 29 and May 1, 1915, on the initiative of the Central Committees of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns.

[31] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 27, pp. 150-155.

The recommendations of this conference were adopted by the Central Committees of both unions. At Moscow, a joint committee on sanatoriums and health resorts was created, which was charged with the duty of putting the plan adopted into effect. It was found necessary to open hospitals of two different types for tuberculosis patients under the auspices of the provincial committees, as follows: (1) sanatoriums for tuberculosis patients amenable to improvement under ordinary sanatorium treatment and under climatic conditions as they might exist locally; and (2) special hospitals, or asylums, for the isolation of chronic and acute cases who could not obtain adequate treatment and isolation at their homes.

Patients requiring treatment at spas were dealt with by a committee in Moscow or by its branch attached to the Kharkov committee of the Zemstvo Union. The Moscow committee was composed of representatives of both unions, of the Army Medical Department, and of the Red Cross Society. It took charge of all beds for tuberculosis patients. The medical officers of the two unions would prepare lists of tubercular patients needing treatment at health resorts and forward the medical histories of such cases, written on special forms, either to Moscow (for twenty-eight provinces) or to Kharkov (thirteen provinces). The history of each case would be carefully gone into by specialists, and the patients summoned by the committee, examined, and sent on to their destination.

By August, 1915, the Moscow committee had at its disposal 2,241 tuberculosis beds, of which 1,129 were maintained by the Union of Zemstvos and 1,112 by the Union of Towns. Of this number, 1,098 (715, Union of Zemstvos; and 383, Union of Towns) were in sanatoriums at health resorts.[32] The total, of course, was quite inadequate and was being systematically enlarged by both unions, so that by March, 1916, the Zemstvo Union alone already had at its disposal 3,391 beds for tuberculosis patients, including 1,162 beds in the Crimea.[33]

Spas.

The problem of the organization of special hospitals for balneophysicotherapeutic treatment arose in the Zemstvo Union as early as the close of 1914. However, the whole problem of using Russian

[32] *Ibid.*, No. 21, pp. 12-27. [33] *Ibid.*, Nos. 35-36, p. 97.

spas for convalescent soldiers had been placed under the jurisdiction of Prince Oldenburg, head of the Army Medical Service, who was granted all necessary credits. In accordance with his orders, the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns were completely excluded from the use of hospital accommodations at the spas in the Caucasus and the mud baths of southern Russia. Prince Oldenburg gave permission exclusively to the medical authorities of the army to use the already existing facilities and even such as had been organized by the two unions. He prescribed an exceedingly complicated procedure for the use of the spas, which was strictly followed, and the result was that many beds remained empty. About April, 1915, the Caucasus was closed to the general evacuations of soldiers and the local organs of the two unions persisted in demanding that some use or other should be made in the hospitals which they had organized in those health localities. At last, in July, 1915, that is, after the season was half over, the unions succeeded in finding a way of taking part in this important work. The sanatoriums in the Caucasus were placed at the disposal of the committees at Moscow and Kharkov which, as we know, had charge of tuberculosis treatment at the spas. The results will be seen from the following table, which shows that the sanatoriums began to fill up only after the month of July.

Ratio of Beds Occupied by Convalescent Soldiers at the Spas to the Total Number of Such Beds in May-April, 1915.

Resorts	*May 15*	*June 1*	*June 15*	*July 1*	*July 15*	*August 1*	*August 15*	*August 21*
Pyatigorsk	3.0	2.2	1.1	9.4	22.9	42.4	74.8	90.6
Kislovodsk	..	..	..	..	..	100.0	87.3	100.0
Essentuky	..	..	..	..	5.0	2.5	100.0	100.0
Zheleznovodsk	..	..	..	25.9	35.9	85.9	81.8	99.4
Sakki	..	..	..	..	29.1	5.5	100.0	100.0
Khadzhibey	..	..	..	.4	11.2	82.9	100.0	100.0

Altogether, the committee on sanatoriums and spas had at its disposal by July, 1915, that is to say, when its work began, 4,902 beds for balneological patients and 790 beds at the mud baths.

The classes of patients that were being sent to the Caucasian mineral water springs were (1) those suffering from chronic diseases of

the internal organs not subject to cure by local means (diseases of the stomach, intestines, liver, and kidneys); (2) cases of acute undernourishment and anaemia resulting from infections, serious injury, and gas poisoning; and (3) patients afflicted with traumatic neuroses, diseases of the spine and the peripheral nervous system.

To the mud baths were being sent patients suffering from chronic diseases of the joints, osteo-muscular organs, and glands.

A very large number of patients were in need of balneological and mud bath treatment. After having been prevented from working until the latter half of the 1915 season, the unions very soon filled most of the sanatoriums that had until then stood idle. It was evident, however, that the available accommodation would prove inadequate if a proper system of selection and evacuation of patients were in operation. Vigorous measures were then taken to adapt some of the mineral springs and mud baths for winter treatment and to enlarge their capacity by at least five hundred beds in preparation for the summer season of 1916.[34]

Relief for Disabled Soldiers.

According to certain calculations, of a somewhat rough character, the number of disabled Russian soldiers was about 600,000. Under the law of June 25, 1912, they were entitled to a pension ranging from 30 rubles to 259 rubles a year, according to the degree of disability.

However, neither this pension nor the bonuses allowed by the law and ranging from ten to forty rubles could assure to the invalids even the most modest livelihood. The Zemstvo Union, both for humanitarian and practical reasons found it impossible to ignore this problem, for the invalids continually accumulated in the zemstvo hospitals, occupying beds that might be required for other patients. The Central Committee laid before the conference of zemstvo delegates on March 12-13, 1915, the question of relief of disabled soldiers. The conference unanimously resolved "to recognize the desirability of the constant participation of the Zemstvo Union in the task of caring for disabled soldiers, and to instruct the Central

[34] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, Nos. 22-23, pp. 52-63.

Committee to take immediate measure for this purpose, pending a final solution of the problem."[35] In the Central Committee a department for the relief of disabled soldiers was organized, and, after communicating with local zemstvos, prepared, with the assistance of competent specialists, a plan of work.[36] We read in this document:

(1) To restore the earning capacity of disabled men, it is necessary to establish physico-therapeutic and orthopedic institutes. (2) To provide relief for those who have lost limbs, it is necessary: (a) to equip workshops for the manufacture of artificial limbs, and homes for soldiers waiting to be provided with such limbs; (b) to open workshops in connection with such homes for the purpose of instructing disabled men in various trades. (3) For the care of soldiers totally disabled, it is necessary: (a) to open asylums and (b) to board them with families (the so-called "patronage"). (4) For the care of the disabled who require isolation and further medical treatment (the blind, the deaf and the dumb, as well as the mentally afflicted, etc.), it is necessary to place them in special asylums. (5) It is necessary also to organize homes for those who have been only partly disabled.

The report goes into all the details of admission, registration, types of hospitals and training schools, programs of general education and training in special trades, and so on. It provides the following scheme for relief work among the disabled men: (1) The Government furnishes the funds and exercises control; (2) the Union of Zemstvos has the general direction and coördinates the work of the zemstvo institutions for the relief of the disabled soldiers; (3) the provincial and district zemstvo boards effect the relief of the disabled through local relief committees; (4) relief committees for small areas are to register and have direct charge of each disabled soldier.

The recommendations of this report were unanimously approved by the conference which took the view that "a disabled soldier has the right to government relief, but it is the duty of society to spare no efforts to make it effective and to place at the disposal of the disabled soldier every possible means by which he may be compensated for the loss of health and earning capacity." Unfortunately, the

[35] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 11, pp. 7-8.

[36] *Report* (*Doklad*) of Central Committee on the relief of disabled men, pp. 1-123.

practical inauguration of this excellent scheme was beset with insurmountable obstacles.

Already on August 11, 1914, a Supreme Council had been formed under the chairmanship of the President of the Council of Ministers for the purpose, as it was stated in the ukase, "of securing the coordination of state, public, and private efforts to provide for the families of mobilized men and the families of those who were wounded and killed." On January 10, 1915, the sphere of activities of this council was enlarged. It was now given charge of activities connected with the finding of employment for disabled soldiers, and other forms of relief. For this purpose the Supreme Council appointed from among its own members a Special Committee presided over by the Emperor's sister, the Grand Duchess Xenia. The local branches of the Committee of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna[37] were recognized as the local organs of the Special Committee. Representatives of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns were invited to take part in the deliberations of the Committee, but they were greatly outnumbered by the bureaucrats. The funds placed at the disposal of the Special Committee were practically unlimited.

The representatives of the Union of Towns submitted to the Committee a plan for the relief of the disabled men that was, on the whole, very much like the plan proposed by the Zemstvo Union. The recommendations of the Union of Towns were duly considered and most of them accepted by the Committee, which then proceeded to carry the program into effect. The Committee decided to create its own organization, but was prepared, at the same time, to subsidize other institutions, such as individual zemstvos. It merely ignored the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. The Committee's own work was carried on principally in Petrograd. The work of its local organs did not run very smoothly. The Committee examined and approved a number of individual and purely casual requests and petitions from various institutions, societies, and private individuals, for subsidies.

During the first year the work done was confined to the comparatively narrow limits of an ordinary charitable institution in Petrograd. Encouraged by this example, many government departments attempted to follow suit. Thus, the Ministry of Commerce and In-

[37] Sister of the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna.

dustry framed a bill to be submitted to the Duma on vocational instruction for disabled men at government expense. Similar steps were taken at the same time by the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of War.

The representatives of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns were persistent in urging the Committee to entrust the work of caring for discharged soldiers to the combined forces of the two unions, which would be in a position to give proper guidance to the individual zemstvos and municipalities and to develop their activities on a nation-wide scale. After lengthy negotiations between the two unions on the one hand and the Committee on the other, the latter was informed on January 15, 1916, that the two unions considered it feasible to coördinate their work with that of the Committee, but on condition that the zemstvos and municipalities should put into effect the common plan worked out by them for the relief of the disabled, and that they should submit their request for subsidies to the Central Committees of the two unions and that these should then forward them to the Special Committee of the Supreme Council.

Five months elapsed without any reply to this suggestion. Finally the Duma took a hand in the matter and then the Supreme Council also found it necessary to pay serious attention to the fact that no coördinated work was being done in an institution which was supposed to have been created precisely for coördinated effort. In the journal of the Supreme Council of June 9, 1916, we read:

> It must be admitted that, as the annual report on the work of the Special Committee shows conclusively, this work, as now carried on, is not fully calculated to discharge the important and responsible duty mentioned above. . . . The branches of the Council and the Committee itself failed to organize adequately the relief of the disabled soldiers. The work done so far was carried on as a private charity, and, as shown by experience, does not satisfy the requirements of a national organization for the relief of disabled soldiers. The problem cannot be satisfactorily solved unless it is put in the hands of a responsible organ on the spot for whom the care of disabled soldiers would be not merely a right, but also a duty, independently of the assistance which they might be receiving from charitable organizations.

After these experiences the Special Committee on June 21, 1916, informed the Zemstvo Union that it was ready to accept its terms.

Nevertheless it was found impossible to initiate joint action satisfactorily. In order to draw up the estimates for the institutions most urgently required, it was important to know the number of the disabled men in each group. The Union, therefore, decided to take a census of the disabled soldiers with the aid of its local organs, and applied for the necessary funds to the Special Committee. The latter, however, intended to take such a census on its own account and refused to grant the necessary funds, with the result that the proposed census was never taken.

How slowly the needs of the war invalids were being attended to by the bureaucratic institutions may be seen from the manner in which the supply of artificial limbs was dealt with. Under the law, every disabled soldier was entitled to be provided with any artificial limb that he required. There were only three institutions in the whole of Russia that could manufacture such limbs: the Institute of the Empress Marie at Petrograd, the Committee of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna at Moscow, and the Committee of the Grand Duchesses Militsa and Anastasia at Kiev. Under the most favorable conditions, however, these three institutions were able to satisfy not more than one-twelfth of the yearly supply that was found to be required during the War. Invalids would thus be compelled to wait their turn for long periods, which might run in certain cases to twelve years. Yet these three institutions in fact alone enjoyed those special privileges without which it was impossible to furnish artificial limbs to discharged soldiers; that is to say, they alone had the right to request the local military commanders to send the invalids at government expense to the nearest workshops for artificial limbs; they alone were entitled to obtain parts of artificial limbs from the government factor at Petrograd; and to them alone was the Ministry of War permitted to make payments for artificial limbs furnished according to a definite scale.

In spite of the difficulties above mentioned, something was nevertheless accomplished in this matter by the zemstvos. Thus, the provincial zemstvo assembly of Voronezh as early as the end of 1914 placed 30,000 rubles at the disposal of the zemstvo board for the relief of disabled soldiers, but especially for the supply of artificial limbs to them. Later on, the same zemstvo opened a small workshop for this purpose. The Kharkov zemstvo had likewise conceived the

idea of opening its own workshop for artificial limbs in 1914, that is to say at a time when the workshop of the Empress Marie Institute at Petrograd was the only one in the whole of Russia.

At first such intentions were met with obstacles of a purely formal character, and it was only on February 20, 1915, that it was found possible to open a small workshop in Kharkov. This was to be capable of supplying about one hundred artificial limbs a month, which was about the same number as that turned out by the Empress Marie Institute. The initial expense was calculated at 13,500 rubles, and the monthly cost at 6,740 rubles. The workshop was maintained with the funds of the Union of Zemstvos. To find skilled workmen proved somewhat difficult, and men had to be specially trained to undertake the work. By September 1, 1915, fifty men were already employed and the plant was working at full capacity. During the first two and a half months 464 artificial limbs were produced and 188 invalids were fitted. On September 22 of the same year a temporary home for the disabled was opened in connection with this workshop, which gave shelter to 137 men in the course of the two months that they had to wait for the limbs to be ready. In Saratov a workshop for artificial limbs was opened in May, 1916, with funds supplied by the Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union. The Saratov Committee of the Union was able to come to an agreement with the local Committee of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth. The two institutions organized a medical commission of professors of the local university and zemstvo doctors, with the participation of military authorities. It decided on the type of artificial limbs to be used, gave orders for their manufacture, and received them from the workshop. The limbs thus obtained were paid for by the military authorities. In Moscow province the yearly requirement in artificial limbs at zemstvo hospitals was estimated to be six hundred. It was proposed to manufacture this number at the expense of the zemstvo in three different localities in the province. After December, 1915, a workshop was in operation at Rostov-on-Don, which was maintained at the expense of the Union. All these workshops of the Union were designed to meet purely local requirements, and it was not proposed to extend the organization to the whole country.

A similarly local and casual character may be observed in the work of those institutions for the disabled of which mention is made

in the reports of local zemstvo committees. Among these, there was the colony of the Kazan zemstvo for fifty disabled men, the combined hospital and home maintained by the Voronezh zemstvo for 130 men, the training schools in the hospitals of Moscow and Voronezh, a workshop for instruction in wood carving attached to a home at Nizhni-Novgorod, a home maintained by the district zemstvo of Skopin, a boot shop for the employment of invalids in Kiev, a home maintained by the zemstvo of Ekaterinoslav, an asylum at Rostov in the province of Yaroslav, a number of physico-therapeutic institutes in various provinces excellently equipped for the special use of invalids, etc.

The Central Committee of the Union, in addition to working out a general plan for the relief of invalids, invariably subsidized every practical measure undertaken in this field by the zemstvo and its own subcommittees. In view of persistent complaints from various localities of the large number of invalids accumulating in the zemstvo hospitals, the Central Committee obtained the consent of the military authorities to the temporary transfer of the disabled to the so-called "patronage" beds, that is, the boarding of patients with local residents. In its efforts to find a practical way of training the invalids in coöperative bookkeeping, it organized in October, 1916, special demonstration courses in coöperative bookkeeping for a hundred invalids at the Shanyavsky People's University.

All these, however, were only isolated measures absolutely inadequate in relation to the vast extent of the actual needs. The problem of relief for disabled soldiers was destined to remain an "unpaid debt" of the unions, as the High Commissioner of the Zemstvo Union bitterly remarked in one of his addresses.[38]

[38] The problem of relief for disabled soldiers has been discussed in great detail in the documents from which the history of the Zemstvo Union is drawn. In addition to the extensive report mentioned above, articles, notices, and projects may be found in the following numbers of the *Bulletin:* 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, and in the supplement to Nos. 45-46 (pp. 1-206).

CHAPTER VII

RELIEF OF FAMILIES OF MOBILIZED MEN

The Legal Situation.

At the beginning of the War the zemstvo appropriated considerable sums for the relief of families of men called to the colors. Thus, for instance, the zemstvo board of Samara proposed to the zemstvo assembly that it should appropriate for this purpose the sum of 50,000 rubles. "The men marching off to war must feel reassured about the fate of their families," said one of the members proposing an increase of this appropriation to 300,000 rubles, and he was heartily supported by the assembly. It should be noted, however, that at first the zemstvo workers themselves had rather vague ideas about the nature and the scope of the relief that should be granted.

Under the laws relating to social welfare, it was the duty of the zemstvos to look after the families of the mobilized members of reserve troops. Until 1912, the zemstvos were obliged to provide for each adult member of a reservist's family, from the moment of mobilization, a monthly food ration of sixty-eight Russian pounds[1] of flour, ten pounds of grits (coarse meal), and four pounds of salt. Cash payments might be substituted for allowances in kind. This law had been in force during the Japanese War, but already under the conditions then prevailing, which were in no way comparable with those of 1914, it became clear that the burden was beyond the financial means of the zemstvos.

After the work of food supply had been taken out of the province of the zemstvos in 1900, they had no supplies of foodstuffs at their disposal and were forced to obtain the enormous sums necessary to buy the provisions to be distributed among the families of the reservists. The zemstvos were forced to draw heavily on their own capital, and to borrow from the Government. Their indebtedness to the Government on such loans was considerable and the repayment imposed a heavy burden upon their budgets.

After numerous petitions requesting the Government to undertake the cost of maintaining the families of mobilized men, a law

[1] One Russian pound = 0.9 lb.

was passed on June 25, 1912, relieving the zemstvos from this charge and laying it upon the state. Under the new law the maintenance of the dependents of mobilized men was assumed by the Treasury and the work of compiling the necessary lists and issuing the allowances was entrusted to special volost relief committees elected at volost meetings and operating under the control of boards of local officers of the central government (*zemski nachalnik*).[2]

The zemstvo institutions, therefore, were entirely excluded from this relief work. Very shortly after the outbreak of the Great War, however, the Government realized the need of reorganizing the administration of relief of dependents of mobilized men. On August 29, 1914, a decree was issued replacing the none too popular boards of local officers of the central government by the new district relief committees in the duty of supervising the work of the volost relief committees. While it is true that these large collegiate bodies included practically all local officials of the central government, it should be noted that representatives of the local government were also admitted. The district zemstvo was represented by all the members of the district zemstvo board and two delegates from the zemstvo assembly. The secretarial work of the district relief committee, which meant practically all the executive work, was entrusted under the new law to the district zemstvo boards. In this manner, the checking of the lists of persons entitled to government allowances compiled by the volost relief committees, as well as the supervision of the preparation of such lists and the control of payments, were concentrated in the hands of the district zemstvo. The essential feature of the law of August 29, 1914, was that it eliminated waste of labor, since many zemstvos had on their own initiative already undertaken a registration of families of mobilized men; for in order to assist them, they naturally required to know the exact number of such persons and the nature of their wants. The government monthly allowances were calculated under the law on the following basis: each person supported was entitled to sixty-eight Russian pounds of flour, ten pounds of grits, four pounds of salt, and one pound of vegetable oil. The allowances were paid in cash, however,

[2] These officials were appointed by the Government and had no relation to the zemstvos.

and the price of foodstuffs was fixed for each province at the time of the mobilization and on September 1 of each year.

Dependents of a mobilized man entitled to government allowances were: his wife and children, his father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, and brothers and sisters, if they depended upon his support. No provision was made for other relatives even though dependent upon the soldier, nor for his "civil wife" and children by her.[3] In the case of soldiers who belonged to religious denominations not enjoying official recognition or who objected to church marriage, the latter restriction naturally implied serious consequences. Moreover, government allowances were strictly uniform and did not take into consideration the economic conditions of the persons provided for.

The zemstvos were anxious to supplement the official allowances by finding out the actual needs of each individual family. Many zemstvos immediately after the declaration of the War took a comprehensive census of such families. After the promulgation of the law of August 29, 1914, they were enabled to combine their work with that of the official volost relief committees, since the censuses which were being taken by the latter were also under the supervision of the district zemstvo boards. In the localities where the volost relief committees had not been established or where they were working inefficiently, the zemstvos, as has been stated above, made use of their subsidiary organizations and formed a large number of new ones. They usually succeeded in enlisting the coöperation of local leaders and organized the relief work according to local conditions.

Organization and Scope of Work.

We have at our disposal data showing how eighty-six district zemstvos in twenty-nine provinces (about one-fifth of all zemstvo districts) dealt with this question at the outbreak of the War. Only sixteen zemstvo provinces failed to make appropriations for the relief of the families of mobilized men. Of these sixteen provinces, eight took no action whatever, while the other eight decided to grant

[3] Under the law of the Russian Empire only church marriages were recognized. "Civil wife" was the usual term for women who were living openly and permanently with men as their wives but had gone through no form of marriage.

relief either by lending agricultural machines and implements from their warehouses, or by organizing the sale of fodder, seeds, and articles of prime necessity at cost prices, or, lastly, by granting credits for such purposes to the coöperative societies. Seven district zemstvo assemblies appropriated for general war necessities, including the relief of soldiers' families, the sum of 209,000 rubles. Four district assemblies decided, in principle, to come to the relief of such families without fixing the total amount of their appropriations, while fifty-nine zemstvos allotted for the same purpose a total of 710,000 rubles. Of this sum, 140,500 rubles was allowed for general relief of soldiers' families without specification. The remaining 569,500 rubles was allocated as follows:

District Zemstvos' Appropriations for the Relief of Families of Mobilized Men at the Outbreak of the War.[4]

Nature of expenditure	*Rubles*	*Percentage*
Supplementary to government allowances	53,500	9.3
Relief in cases not provided for by the law	166,500	29.2
Maintenance of the farm (assistance in harvest work, loans for agricultural needs, subsidies to farming organizations which undertook to cultivate the land of mobilized men, and supplying seeds where urgently needed)	290,000	50.9
Fuel, housing, etc.	11,000	2.0
Care of orphans (the opening of asylums and homes, the grant of scholarships at agricultural and other schools, clothing, etc.)	13,000	2.4
Sundry (free medical help, support of victims of natural calamities, etc.)	8,000	1.4
Investigation of conditions of families of mobilized men and office expenses	27,500	4.8
Total	569,500	100

The grand total of funds appropriated by the provincial zemstvos for the relief of the families of mobilized men, and for the care of war orphans, during the first year of the War, was 6,280,304 rubles, while the total appropriations of the district zemstvos for the same period were 4,446,076 rubles.[5]

[4] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 10, pp. 51-52.

[5] The latter figure is for only 312 out of 427 districts.

As a rule, the provincial zemstvos confined themselves to drafting a general plan of action, outlining the fundamental principles of the relief work and distributing the appropriations among the several districts either equally or in proportion to the number of men mobilized. The district zemstvos, on the basis of their own investigations, would then grant the actual relief to those in need, working through the subsidiary organs that had either been in operation before the War or been newly organized after its outbreak. Other bodies besides those connected with the zemstvos took part in the organization of the relief work. Such were the official volost relief committees and various charitable organizations. Lists of persons entitled to relief were usually discussed by village assemblies and, after amendment, were submitted to the district zemstvo board. The latter, in accordance with the instructions received from provincial assembly, would then compile the final lists.

The district board and district committee of the Zemstvo Union were to see to it that the actual relief should be distributed locally as prescribed. However, the local organizations of the zemstvo and charitable institutions usually collected funds also on their own initiative. In the cities relief committees arranged concerts, theatrical performances, lotteries, public lectures, and other entertainments, and in the rural districts did everything in their power to collect donations and to impress on the peasants the importance of helping the sick and wounded, as well as the families of the soldiers, urging them to contribute in money or in kind or give their labor in the harvest season instead. In this way assistance was offered from all sides to the families of the mobilized men. In the first place, the law gave these families a right to government allowances, which varied with the period and the locality. During the first year of the War the average receipts of a family from this source were 13 to 15 rubles a month. Next came the additional zemstvo allowances to necessitous families, and lastly there were local charities contributing their share to supplement the other two sources of relief.

By way of example we may mention the district of Dnieprovsk in the province of Taurida, where 17,328 families aggregating 65,513 persons were receiving the government allowances on October 1, 1915. The monthly amount of the allowances fluctuated between 2.82 rubles and 3.56 rubles a head. A family received an average

of 13.5 rubles a month. The zemstvo investigation disclosed 1,700 families in particular distress and a total of 25,523 rubles was expended for their relief out of the zemstvo funds by October, 1915. For the whole period from the beginning of the War this amounted to about 15 rubles a family. All other organizations operating in the district, together with private individuals, gave a total of 46,570 rubles for the benefit of 6,800 families, which made an average of 6 to 7 rubles per family for the entire period. At the same time, nineteen village relief committees, twenty parochial relief committees, and sixteen other organizations were engaged in the relief of soldiers' families in the same district, not to mention the official volost relief committees and the zemstvo commissioners directing the work locally. Of course, this is merely one instance, and the organization of relief was probably quite different elsewhere.

Nature of Relief.

We now have to deal with the question of the nature of the relief granted by the zemstvos. Its more important features have already been noted in the table furnished above. We may combine them roughly in three groups: (1) direct assistance to families of mobilized men; (2) the care of the orphans of soldiers killed in action; and (3) assistance toward the upkeep of farms left without working hands.

Direct aid was particularly needed by the families of workers and artisans in the larger cities, who found themselves in a truly desperate situation after the outbreak of the War. In Petrograd the district zemstvo board hastened to organize relief committees (there were nineteen altogether) which began their work by opening soup kitchens in the school buildings, where about 6,000 dinners were supplied daily to families of mobilized soldiers, with milk for their children. Next in importance was the problem of housing. Those most desperately in need of dwelling accommodations, were quartered in the school buildings which stood idle during vacations. Then followed vigorous efforts on the part of the relief committees to find permanent quarters for these families, subscriptions were collected, premises were rented, and a considerable number of dwellings were placed at their disposal by the landlords rent free. These quarters,

moreover, were equipped with whatever was indispensable. When the weather grew colder the relief committees concentrated their efforts on purchasing firewood at a reduced price, or obtaining it perhaps free of charge. All the relief committees opened special employment bureaus for soldiers' wives. These were given instruction in sewing and designing, and large numbers of sewing machines were purchased and often handed over to the women against payment by easy instalments and sometimes without any payment. Orders were obtained from private firms, the zemstvos, and the Government. The reports of ten out of the nineteen relief committees deal with the work accomplished by 2,100 women, who in the course of one year executed orders to the value of 150,000 rubles. They were also given employment in factories, in the various city departments, and as servants in private families. Day nurseries were established for children.[6]

In Moscow the provincial zemstvo committee devoted its attention in the first place to those families of mobilized soldiers who were anxious to return to their native villages. The chaotic conditions prevailing on the railways during the first months of the War, and the destitution of these families, made the problem far from easy. Still, notwithstanding these difficulties, it was found possible to send back to their homes a total of 10,330 families up to the middle of November, 1914. To help the remaining families, a special subcommittee was created in the provincial committee, where the families of mobilized men were given free legal assistance in obtaining employment and in placing their children in homes or orphanages. Among other things, the Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union established at Moscow a large number of tailoring shops where material was cut and distributed for women who work in their homes. Out of the 35,000 women employed on this work, 21,000, that is, 60 per cent, were soldiers' wives.

Relief measures of practically the same kind were being taken in all the provincial and district towns of Russia. Everywhere numerous charitable organizations, relief committees, and women's committees were rallying round the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns, to collect donations for soldiers' families and to make a careful study of their wants. Dwellings, fuel, warm clothing, underwear,

[6] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 30-31, pp. 223-227.

footwear, opportunities of employment, day nurseries for infants and children—such were the principal forms of relief reported by the various committees of the Zemstvo Union.

In comparison with the enormous sums of money spent by the Government in regular allowances prescribed by law for the families of mobilized men, the disbursements of zemstvos and private charitable organizations were insignificant. Nevertheless, this tireless and enthusiastic work for the benefit of the soldiers' families, especially during the first year of the War, raised the morale of the army, while in the interior of Russia it tended to introduce certain correctives to the official government program of relief and to supplement it.

Relief of Orphans.

From the very first few months of the War the local organizations were confronted with the problem of war orphans. Both zemstvos and the committees of the Zemstvo Union recognized clearly that it was upon them that the duty fell of creating local bodies for the coördination of all efforts on behalf of the orphans, and they were fully aware of the immensity of the task. According to investigations conducted by some of the zemstvos, the average number of children who had lost their fathers in battle six months after the outbreak of the War was found to be as high as 1,500 per province. This figure was naturally increasing daily. In the province of Kharkov, there were found to be 2,300 such orphans in May, 1915, and in the province of Perm 1,270 were reported in March of the same year.

The organization of the relief of the aged and of orphans in Russia had never been satisfactory. According to the law the care of the aged and disabled and of children having lost both parents and having no relatives able to provide for them, in the rural districts, had been made one of the communal duties of the *mir*, or peasant community. Actually, however, allowances to such persons, if granted at all, were mostly in kind. Those in need were simply made to move from house to house and provided with scanty food and lodging for the night. Cash disbursements for their assistance, and the organized relief, had never been adequate. Thus, in 1894, the average expenditure on relief of the needy per volost in forty-seven prov-

inces of European Russia amounted to no more than 17.16 rubles.[7] The functions of the zemstvos included, among other things, charitable work, but only "within the limits of available means." Such means, however, were always inadequate, and after allotting the greater part to public health and elementary schools in the rural districts, the zemstvos could appropriate for charitable work only the most insignificant sums (in 1914, only 1.4 per cent of the total budget).

The general welfare of orphans was looked after by a number of official charitable organizations. Thus, under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Empress Marie, 76 asylums sheltering 1,700 orphans had been in existence previous to the War. Again, under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture, we find a board on orphanages. The welfare of war orphans in particular was looked after by two bureaucratic committees, the Alexis Committee, and the Romanov Committee, the first administering the maintenance funds and the second granting from time to time special appropriations to the zemstvo institutions, peasant communities, and charities for the upkeep of institutions already in existence and the establishment of additional ones.

All these measures, however, proved inadequate and there was an urgent necessity of working out some common plan, of an exact registration of the steadily increasing number of orphans, and of obtaining adequate appropriations from the State Treasury. But it was found impossible to carry out these measures under the conditions prevailing in Russia, and the result was that individual zemstvos and zemstvo committees found themselves confronted with the exceedingly difficult task of solving the various problems from their own limited resources and in uncoördinated fashion.

Upon the whole, the plan of the zemstvos was as follows: (1) For war orphans of pre-school age, that is, two to seven years, as well as for orphans of school age not cared for in orphanages, a system of boarding in private families was to be adopted, under the supervision of the district zemstvo boards and of their local organs, and funds were to be provided for the maintenance of orphans thus placed; (2) compulsory education was to be provided for orphans

[7] *Trudi* (*Proceedings*) of the Conference on Public Charities, May 11-16, 1914.

of school age, from eight to eleven years, and in case of necessity, that is, if it should prove inconvenient to board them with private families, special dormitories were to be opened for them at the schools; (3) orphans above school age were to be trained in professional schools and housed in special dormitories; and (4) young girls were to be placed in suitable general or professional schools, or in orphanages where they were to be taught needlework.[8]

The practical realization of this program varied considerably according to locality, depending mainly upon the funds available. Most frequently the simplest and cheapest methods were used, that is, the children were handed over to peasant families living in the same villages, and the zemstvos paid for their maintenance. According to local reports, two-thirds of the total number of orphans were placed with near relatives, about 7 per cent with distant relatives, and the remainder with foster parents and strangers. Boarding in private families naturally demanded constant and careful supervision. Under normal conditions the district zemstvo boards would not have been in a position to exercise effective supervision and control; but with the general enthusiasm prevailing among the people during the first year of the War, and with numerous local committees of relief and private organizations, the task was not an impossible one.

There was one enterprise which earned the whole-hearted recognition and praise of zemstvo workers, namely, the farm orphanages, or colonies. The idea of establishing them had occurred to some of the zemstvos prior to the War, but its realization at that time was prevented not only by the lack of funds, but also because a number of other difficult problems presented themselves in connection with the organization of such establishments. To begin with, there was the question of the age of admission. Then there was the question of how to organize the practical work of the inmates and, while instructing them in new agricultural methods, to keep the instruction at the same time within the limited scope of peasant husbandry. The War, by making it urgently necessary to provide for the war orphans, compelled many of the zemstvos to take some practical steps without further delay and to leave the solution of the problems confronting them to the play of circumstance and local condi-

[8] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 11, p. 61.

tions. The estimates were usually worked out so that one-third of the expenses should be covered by subsidies from the Romanov Committee and two-thirds by the provincial and district zemstvos, the Zemstvo Union, and by charitable organizations both national and local.

The zemstvos endeavored to establish these colonies in the neighborhood of the zemstvo hospitals and schools, so as to secure for the children medical aid as well as elementary education. The size of the establishments and the cost of maintenance varied greatly. Thus, the Eupatoria district zemstvo in the province of Taurida intended to establish a colony for three hundred orphans between the ages of two and seventeen, involving an initial expenditure of 45,000 rubles and an annual charge for upkeep of 14,000 rubles. More often, however, we find plans for establishments for only forty to sixty inmates, in which case it is found desirable and perhaps sufficient to organize four or five such institutions in each district. While it was not found possible everywhere to carry out this program on the scale originally contemplated, many of the district zemstvos, nevertheless, were able to set up such institutions.

In this connection we must note also the revival of an idea which had, apparently, been abandoned, after having enjoyed at one time a great deal of popularity—the idea of organizing zemstvo day nurseries in villages during the height of the harvest season. Originally, these nurseries were intended to serve purposes of public health and prevent village fires by looking after the children whose mothers were busy in the fields. The necessity of employing female labor during the War in the absence of men brought this idea again to the fore. The peasants had previously looked askance upon such enterprises, but now the idea of establishing nurseries of this kind often originated with the peasants themselves, as well as with the cooperative associations.

As a rule, these nurseries were established in the zemstvo school buildings standing vacant during the summer months. Usually, they were open only in the daytime and maintained for a period of one or two months. Admission was granted to the children of soldiers, ranging from infants to children of five and even seven years. The mothers who were receiving a separation allowance were to provide a specified quantity of milk and food. Special funds were also supplied by the zemstvos for improving the feeding of the children

during their stay at these institutions. In some of the provinces the cost of maintaining one hundred children in a nursery for a period of one month and a half was found to be about 500 rubles. The management was often in the hands of the local school teacher.

It must not be imagined, however, that institutions of this kind were established all over Russia, and in sufficient numbers. This organization was very different from the vast enterprise by which hospital facilities were provided for the sick and wounded soldiers. In the latter case there was a coördinated, nation-wide plan, prepared and carried out by the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns, after they had succeeded in convincing the authorities that it was absolutely necessary for the Government to allocate adequate funds for this purpose. The day nurseries, on the contrary, were supported merely by local enterprise on a modest scale, aided only in a few favorable instances by the official charitable organizations.

The problem of what particular form, or forms, the care of war orphans should take was discussed many times in the course of the War by various government institutions, but no definite action was ever decided upon. There were numerous committees which were supposed to look after these matters, but they proved incapable of making any concentrated effort and of creating local organs for the realization of their plans. It must be conceded, therefore, that the care of war orphans, as also the relief of disabled soldiers, left much to be desired.

A third form of assistance, agricultural relief, was at first granted only to the families of mobilized men; gradually, however, the zemstvos found themselves compelled to extend their aid to many other categories of peasant homes, which had suffered heavily as a result of the War. This matter will be dealt with in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

ASSISTANCE TO FARMING

Difficulties of the Problem.

Approximately one-half of all sums allocated by the provincial and district zemstvos in aid of soldiers' families was devoted to the work of assisting their farming establishments, which the mobilizations had deprived of the necessary labor.[1] But these sums were very far from satisfying the actual wants. Moreover, even those appropriations which had been made available were not always fully utilized as they should have been.

The zemstvos, in order to relieve the situation to the best of their limited means, increased the number of harvesting machines in their agricultural depots, from which they were issued to the peasants either free of charge or at a very low rental. The zemstvos also stored supplies of seed selling them on credit, on very favorable and easy terms, to the families of the mobilized men. Lastly, the poorest peasants were assisted with money, to help them pay the wages of the labor they hired.

The attempts to come to the aid of agriculture met with almost insurmountable obstacles. It was not always possible to obtain a sufficient number of the required machines; or again, the peasants found themselves absolutely incapable of operating them and, besides, the compulsory rotation of crops due to communal tenure and scattered strips placed obstacles in the way of the efficient use of steam plows, harvesting machines, binders, and other agricultural implements. Expensive and heavy machines were of little use on the narrow strips of land owned by soldiers, which were simply lost amidst the strips belonging to the other peasants of the village. The distribution of seeds and money to pay the wages of hired labor required individual attention, in addition to a very thorough knowledge of the situation of each family and of its needs and resources. Numerous objections were brought against the idea of monetary assistance, and even some of the zemstvo agronomic experts who, as

[1] Up to June, 1915, there had been assigned for the relief of such establishments: 1,472,906 rubles by the district zemstvos and 1,704,088 rubles by the provincial zemstvos.

a rule, were inclined to stress the needs of the peasantry, not infrequently maintained that "to hand over to the soldiers' wives money for the payment of wages to hired labor means simply an increase in their separation allowances, because they cannot find any hired labor, and the money will be devoted to some other purpose."

Public Initiative.

The most important activity of the zemstvos and of the Zemstvo Union, however, centered elsewhere. Just as in other fields, so likewise in agricultural life, the zemstvos became partly the initiators of the various enterprises and partly the centers, around which public initiative was able to rally. Where there were no zemstvos, or where they were inactive or indolent, relief was either not granted to all or, if granted, was inadequate. It may be said confidently, however, that this was unusual. In the overwhelming majority of cases relief was granted where there was actual want, and this not only by the relatives and nearest neighbors, but frequently by the combined efforts of the entire village community. In many places the zemstvos addressed appeals to the population of entire districts. Realizing that the printed page would reach the peasants very slowly, the zemstvos endeavored to influence them by means of those numerous small organizations which we have mentioned above, as well as through the various zemstvo workers whose business it was to keep in constant touch with the peasantry. Some of the zemstvos confined themselves to appealing and organizing; others promised to do everything possible to secure the proper direction of the relief work, and still others made their help dependent upon public support. Thus, the Moscow district zemstvo assembly attached to the grant of allowances certain conditions which were stated in an announcement, 2,000 copies of which were distributed among the volost officials, coöperative societies, zemstvo relief committees, and agronomic experts; the announcement declared that relief would be granted in amounts not exceeding two-thirds of the total sum required and that the balance would have to be raised by local organizations either from their own resources or by voluntary donations; it was provided, further, that the participation of the peasants in relief work by personal service was to be counted as equivalent to a cash contribution.[2]

[2] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 21, p. 60.

This endeavor by the zemstvos to encourage initiative among the masses met with the loyal support of the coöperative and agricultural societies, and the community at large. When the spring work in 1915 was about to begin in a large number of provinces, volost and village assemblies were held at which resolutions were passed to support the families of mobilized men. In the province of Ekaterinoslav alone more than a thousand resolutions to this effect are known to have been adopted, and a similar attitude was noted in the provinces of Samara, Kiev, Kherson, and many others. In many rural communities in the district of Kherson the village meetings pledged themselves to render every assistance to the families of mobilized men in connection with threshing and the sowing of winter crops. In the province of Nizhni-Novgorod the village meetings everywhere resolved to apportion among the villagers the labor of cultivating the land of mobilized men, at the rate of two or three laborers for every ten residents. In eighteen volosts of the district of Gomel in the province of Mogilev the peasants decided to plow the fields of mobilized men for the sowing of winter crops without remuneration. In the district of Ananev in the province of Kherson village meetings in some instances appointed special "guardians" for each soldier's family, who were expected to help them both by personal labor and by lending them whatever implements they might be in need of. In the district of Uman in the province of Kiev the peasants assessed themselves at the rate of twenty to forty copecks a deciatine and out of the funds thus collected money was given to the families of the soldiers to enable them to buy seed and hire labor. As a rule, such relief was granted to families in actual need, and only rarely to all families of soldiers. The period of 1914-1915 abounds in resolutions of peasant meetings pledging themselves to render assistance in the form of personal service. Families possessing horses were requested to combine with their relatives or nearest neighbors for work in common, while families having none were given assistance by the community. Some of these resolutions specified the number of deciatines of land belonging to soldiers' wives which was to be cared for by the community; in other cases, again, special labor gangs would be appointed to look after land of this class.

At first the efforts of the zemstvos, coöperative societies, and peasant organizations yielded favorable results, so that the year

1914 and the early part of 1915 passed satisfactorily. At that time there were even districts in which area under cultivation was larger than it had been in 1913 (for example the districts of Verkhoturie and Okhana in the province of Perm). Later on, when the repeated mobilizations had taken about 35 per cent of the men of working age, the situation naturally became more difficult. The shortage of labor began to make itself felt more acutely and community relief was granted on a less extensive scale. The enthusiasm of the first year of the War was waning. At the same time the entire structure of peasant farming was beginning to show alarming symptoms of deterioration.

Effects of the War on Peasant Farming.

Many of the zemstvos kept a close watch on the economic developments in the rural districts, the Moscow zemstvo showing exceptional zeal and foresight in this direction. By repeated statistical inquiries on the spot and by summarizing the replies to these inquiries obtained through its numerous correspondents, the district zemstvo boards were in a position throughout the War to watch the life of the peasantry very closely and to submit from time to time valuable reports to the meetings of the boards. Similar work was accomplished by many other zemstvos, and gradually a picture of alarming deterioration began to unfold itself in rural Russia. It was evident that the calamity was spreading rapidly. It was affecting an ever increasing number of peasant households and it demanded imperatively a drastic remedy. On the surface, the situation appeared to be fairly normal. In fact, as far as the condition of the individual peasant was concerned, there seemed to be even something like an improvement. On every hand it was observed that money was flowing freely into the villages and it was found that, whilst the cities were already beginning to feel the pinch of a food shortage, rural districts, upon the whole, were living better than ever before, for the peasants were now consuming more and more of their home produce and were becoming increasingly averse to selling grain. Of course, this was more common in the producing regions, but there was evidence of it also, for instance, in the province of Moscow. At the same time it was noticed that savings banks deposits were rising rapidly.

However, along with these manifestations of outward prosperity,

sinister symptoms of serious trouble were becoming apparent. For one thing, the equipment of the peasantry was deteriorating and getting to be less and less serviceable. Then there was the drain upon the labor supply as each successive mobilization took more men from the fields. The consequence was that those who still remained were compelled to work to the point of exhaustion. Another difficulty was that in the consuming provinces there was often considerable delay in the delivery of the seed provided by the zemstvos. Live stock was growing scarce with the resulting shortage of manure. Mineral fertilizers, ordinarily imported from abroad, could no longer be obtained. It was impossible to obtain a sufficiency of agricultural implements, not only expensive machinery, but even the most common tools. There were neither scythes nor sickles, and there was no way of obtaining steel parts for plows and harrows, iron for wagon tires, and nails and leather, so that even ordinary repairs could not be properly executed. In these circumstances it was useless to lease additional land from the large estates, the peasant being unable to take care even of his own land.

Under these conditions the area cultivated by the peasants was shrinking more and more and gradually coming down to the level of their bare requirements. The peasants were sowing chiefly rye and partially neglecting their spring crops. With increasing frequency one now finds in the zemstvo reports appeals for help, not only for the wives of the soldiers, but for "farms undermined by the war" generally.

On the estates of the landlords conditions were even worse. Rents were declining, much land ordinarily leased out to the peasants was now lying fallow, labor was almost unobtainable, and wages were mounting so high as to leave no assurance that the cost of producing the grain could ever be covered. The area under cultivation was shrinking perceptibly. The reports describing these conditions were beginning to appear in the newspapers, often in an exaggerated form, and, coupled with the declining consignments of food to the cities, began seriously to alarm the public.

In the first half of 1916 the Ministry of Agriculture, yielding to the demands of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns, at last decided to take an agricultural census which would show, among other things, the available supplies of labor and live stock and the area cultivated. The census was taken by the zemstvos in twenty-one dif-

ferent provinces, while the tabulation of the data outlined was entrusted to the statistical organs of the zemstvo boards. The results proved far less alarming than had been expected by the pessimists, it being found that while the shrinkage in the cultivated area in some localities was indeed very great, it was only about 12 per cent on the whole.[3] But, even these results were considered sufficiently serious, the more so since the causes that were responsible for the situation continued to operate; for, after the census of 1916, there was no respite in the mobilizations of men and the commandeering of horses and cattle for war purposes.

Two important tasks now confronted the zemstvos: (1) to assist the impaired economy of the peasant households, and (2) to take general measures to meet the decline of agriculture and to check the further shrinkage of the cultivated area.

Relief of Peasant Farmers.

Zemstvo aid to peasant households impoverished by the War was given in the same forms in which it had been previously given to the families of soldiers; but, as the need continued to grow, the zemstvos found it necessary to urge the population to take an active part in the work of relief. "In the work of organizing relief for the farmers," says a report of the Moscow district zemstvo board, "it is necessary to undertake extensive propaganda for the collaboration of the local institutions, such as village assemblies, coöperative societies, relief committees, etc."[4] This propaganda met with some measure of success, and in the Moscow district, for example, assistance was rendered to 1,209 households in 151 rural communities. Village assemblies gave relief to 786 households and the relief committees and coöperative societies assisted 423 households. A total of 15,221 rubles was spent, including 9,313 rubles from zemstvo funds and 5,908 rubles from local funds appropriated by the village assemblies, coöperative societies, and relief committees, as well as from voluntary donations.

[3] According to Prokopovich the cultivated area in forty-five provinces not occupied by the enemy declined from a total of 71,765,000 deciatines in 1914 to 70,190,000 deciatines in 1915 and 64,741,000 deciatines in 1916. See S. P. Prokopovich, *Voina i Narodnoe Khozyaistvo* (*The War and the National Economy*), Moscow, 1918.

[4] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 43-44, p. 184.

The following instance taken from the district of Moscow, will make it clear how complex these popular organizations of mutual assistance sometimes became. Following a conference of the representatives of coöperative societies with the district zemstvo board, the credit association of Durykino, in response to the appeal of the zemstvo, decided to come to the aid of farms which were suffering from war conditions. It was joined by eleven local organizations, including dairymen's associations, parochial relief committees, the zemstvo relief committee, and the committee for the relief of disabled soldiers. All these organizations jointly appointed a committee which divided the volost of Durykino into ten areas. In each area a commission was appointed for the purpose of investigating cases of need and determining the extent of the assistance to be rendered. Among the members of the commissions were village elders, medical officers, school teachers, and the clergy. The estimates and the plan of relief measures drawn by the commissions were examined and approved by the Durykino zemstvo relief committee. As a result, assistance was given to 330 households in forty rural communities.[5]

In some provinces the organization was better planned and more efficient. We have already mentioned the establishment of the volost economic councils in Perm in the spring of 1916. At the close of July, 1916, the provincial board reported to the provincial assembly of Perm as follows:

> According to the testimony of the district board of Kamyshlov, the hopes of the zemstvo for a more efficient system of relief based on popular initiative, as represented by the volost economic councils, were found to be fully justified. . . . In the opinion of the district board, the zemstvo ought to follow the same procedure in its further measures for assisting the farmers. It was ascertained, for instance, in the course of the sowing operations that all implements, horses, and other facilities placed at the disposal of the farmers by the zemstvo had been utilized by the volost economic councils in a thoroughly efficient manner.

Of similar volost councils or committees we read in the reports of those organizations in the provinces of Ufa, Samara, and Stavropol. In other localities they were known by different names, but followed the same plan of work and succeeded in rallying the farmers round the zemstvos.

[5] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 43-44, pp. 182-183.

Student Farm-Labor Squads.

The second task, that of combating the general reduction of the cultivated area, required a much broader organization and necessitated, in the first place, the bringing in of labor from other sections of the country. It seemed as if this demand for labor might be satisfied by the organization of undergraduates, prisoners of war, and refugees as labor squads, as well as by using the troops stationed in the interior of the country.

The student farm-labor squads were organized in many places partly on the initiative of the school authorities and partly on that of the students themselves. The Minister of Education, in a special ordinance encouraged such enterprises. After the approval of the movement by the Emperor himself, the formation of student labor squads acquired in the eyes of the school authorities an almost obligatory character. In the majority of instances these squads were organized in the schools, transported to their destination, and maintained at the expense of the zemstvos. They were put to work according to the instructions of village assemblies, volost relief committees, coöperative societies, etc., and were under the general supervision of the zemstvo agronomic staffs. Results varied according to the personal qualifications of those in charge. It was found by experience that the greatest benefit was obtained from the work of those squads which were equipped with machines, as well as with skilled mechanics for their proper handling, and which were placed under the direct control of zemstvo agronomists. Often, however, individuals sent out from the squad for work in this or that particular peasant household performed their duties successfully. At first the peasants looked askance upon these young people and in some places even received them with good-natured mockery. Gradually, however, they became used to the innovation, fully appreciating the eagerness of the lads to help them in an emergency. The result was a steadily increasing demand for their services, and we find in zemstvo reports references to truly touching farewells arranged in the villages on the departure of these youthful friends of the peasantry.

As a rule, student squads were quartered in the buildings of the zemstvo schools, and fed partly at zemstvo expense and partly with provisions given direct by the peasants. Their work in most cases

was gratuitous, and even in those instances where remuneration was received the money went to the purchase of clothing for the students. Before going out to stations assigned to them, they were often given a course of lectures and sometimes provided with the opportunity of gaining practice in mowing or in the handling of the more complicated agricultural machines. Reports on the organization and the work done by student farm-labor squads are available for twenty-three provinces, although it is probable that the number of provinces in which they operated was considerably larger.[6]

Prisoners of War.

The prisoners of war were under the jurisdiction of the general staff. Their status was regulated by numerous rules and regulations which provided that they might also be employed as laborers. In order, however, to obtain prisoners of war for farm work, a great deal of red tape had to be gone through. The peasant in need of prisoners of war had to file his application with the zemstvo board. Then the board, if it consented to allocate a number of prisoners of war for such work and to look after them, would inform the governor of the province of its decision. The governor would then forward the application of the board to the general staff. Upon the arrival of the prisoners of war at the place designated, the zemstvo board would distribute them over the district. Sometimes complaints were heard that the zemstvo distributed the prisoners chiefly among the owners of large estates, and indeed the census of 1916 showed that only 38 per cent of all prisoners had been employed on peasant farms and the balance on the estates of the landlords. There is, however, no reason to attribute this necessarily to bias on the part of the zemstvo board in favor of the landlords. In the first place, we must remember that the large landowners undoubtedly required all the help they could possibly get, much more urgently than the peasants and that practically the entire reduction in the area sown which at one time so greatly alarmed the Government and the public occurred on large estates rather than on the peasant farms. On the other hand, we frequently find in the documents dealing with this subject instances of emphatic refusal by the peasants to take advantage of the labor of prisoners of war. This was the case, for

[6] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 37-38, pp. 106-108; No. 39, pp. 95-100.

instance, in a majority of the volosts of the district of Krasnoslobodsk in the province of Penza, in the entire district of Menzelisk in the province of Ufa, and at many other places. The refusals are to be explained by the difficulties in obtaining prisoners of war. Thus, the prisoners would be assigned to parties of not less than thirty men, and this only within a short distance from the officially established base, not to mention other vexatious restrictions. In actual practice matters would be settled, as a rule, with the help of the zemstvos, but nevertheless the obligations imposed upon the farmers by the military authorities in regard to prisoners very often discouraged the peasants from using labor of this class. The big landowners, on the other hand, were quite willing to meet all terms and conditions, since wages for farm labor in many places had risen to fantastic heights. Thus, in the province of Taurida wages of a laborer had risen to 4 rubles a day, whereas prisoners of war could be obtained for an average wage of 8 rubles a month, of which amount the prisoner himself received 4.42 rubles, while the zemstvo board retained the balance, to defray the cost of maintenance.

A few months before the outbreak of the Revolution the Government estimated the number of prisoners of war employed in 1916 on farm labor at about 496,000.

Other Sources of Labor.

The labor of the refugees from the war zone on the farms of central and southern Russia played a negligible part. Among the 3,000,000 men and women who had either voluntarily or compulsorily departed from the war zone, only about 250,000 were farm laborers, not to mention the fact that these refugees were often in a state of physical exhaustion. To form them into labor squads and furnish them with expert agricultural direction, tools, and machinery were likewise matters that caused anxiety to the zemstvos.

Some of the zemstvos even made attempts to make use of the inmates of prisons, but the information on this subject is inadequate. Finally, there were requests from zemstvos for permission to import Chinese and Korean labor. How difficult and complicated all such measures proved in practice appears clearly from the outcome of the latter attempt. In this instance the applicant was the district zemstvo board of Konstantinograd. The application was first ad-

dressed to the provincial governor and he forwarded it to the immigration department. The latter informed the governor that "under the regulations concerning the employment of yellow labor in the Empire west of the right bank of the Volga River, approved by the Emperor on April 4 of the present year, members of the aforementioned yellow races will be admitted only in individual deserving cases by agreement between the Ministers of War, Interior, and Transport." Accordingly, the provincial governor advised the Konstantinograd zemstvo to obtain in the manner prescribed a permit for the admission of Chinese and then to "apply to the information bureau on labor in the cities of Khabarovsk and Vladivostok, which have the charge of hiring yellow labor." We do not know whether the Konstantinograd zemstvo found itself still possessed of sufficient energy to attempt to overcome these entanglements of red tape.

Agricultural Machinery and Implements.

Closely related to the problem of labor was that of agricultural machinery. Throughout the War the zemstvo warehouses had been mobilizing their full stock of farming machinery, and even in 1917, when Russian agriculture already suffered from an acute shortage of everything, the Association of Western Zemstvos in Kiev was still in a position to supply farmers with all kinds of indispensable articles. It furnished altogether 11,798 plows, 941 seed drills, 868 straw cutters, 1,785 harrows, 1,480 grain cleaners and graders, 1,526 cultivators and extirpators, 26,936 scythes, 6,282 sickles, 793 threshing machines, 236 sets of thresher equipment, 5,538 pitchforks, 8,018 threshing flails, 823 weeders, 963 spades, 1,995 anvils and hammers, 30,110 arshins[7] of transmission belts, 86,000 puds[8] of binder twine, 42,454 puds of fertilizers, 79,363 puds of forage seeds, and 1,042 puds of garden seeds.

Of course, all this was a mere drop in the ocean, relatively to the actual needs of the country. The supplies in the zemstvo warehouses were very far from satisfying the requirements of the peasantry in new farming equipment, and a number of zemstvos proceeded to set up their own repair shops, while some of them attempted to produce their own agricultural machines and implements, as well as fertilizers and other such articles. The zemstvo of Vyatka took over the

[7] One arshin = 0.7 yard.

[8] One ton = 62 puds.

large Kolomna, the Ufa provincial zemstvo in 1916 opened a factory of agricultural machinery, and the zemstvos of Perm, Nizhni-Novgorod, and Kherson proceeded to equip similar factories. The Penza zemstvo engaged, among other things, in the manufacture of binder twine, and the zemstvos of Samara, Perm, and Vyatka built special works for the manufacture of potash and sulphuric acid.

To operate the farming machinery efficiently, special instructors and skilled mechanics were required, for the farmers themselves were frequently just as inexperienced as the refugees, soldiers, and students. This is why the zemstvo organized short courses of instruction at which hundreds of special instructors were trained. As for the machinery that happened to be available, the zemstvos endeavored to turn it to the best account. Thus, a large number of zemstvo assemblies requested the authorities to make certain that machines and implements in the possession of private owners should be placed at their disposal on suitable terms, as soon as their work would be finished on the private farms. Finally, in 1917, the zemstvos very frequently petitioned the authorities for permission to cultivate, free of charge, lands which would otherwise remain fallow.

The Peasant Woman.

All these measures naturally tended to affect the agricultural situation in Russia during the War; in fact, however, it was not these measures which saved the farms of the peasantry from total collapse. It was the peasant women who accomplished this great task. According to the census of 1916, there were 158 women for every hundred men engaged on the land. It was the peasant women who took the places vacated by the menfolk in the fields as well as at home and, with the aid of neighbors, relatives, coöperative societies, and zemstvos, successfully carried on their worn shoulders the burden of Russian agriculture. It is interesting to note in this connection a curious evolution in the very character of the Russian peasant woman, as she found herself acquiring a new importance in the eyes of the community and was getting for the first time in her life into personal contact with the authorities.

The Russian peasant woman now very often acted as the independent head of the household, straining all her resources, physical and mental, to prevent its breakdown. She began to develop a new

consciousness of the value of her own work, a sense of personal dignity, and a jealous regard for her rights. Another surprising discovery in this connection was that the peasant women were less conservative than the men; spurred on by necessity, they showed themselves quite ready to welcome new methods of farming.

The Economic Section of the Central Committee.

On March 14, 1916, the conference of the Union of Zemstvos decided to organize an economic section under the Central Committee, whose business it should be to coördinate the economic activities of the Union, and to prepare a plan for a better and more effective use of the agronomic resources of the country.

Accordingly, an economic section was formed, and enlisted the services of many prominent specialists and experts; it held several conferences at which a number of economic problems were carefully considered and worked out. Unfortunately, its activities were of short duration and it was therefore unable to accomplish much of practical value. It called the attention of the authorities and the public to the excellent work of the zemstvo of Perm and its volost economic councils, and it carried on a vigorous propaganda for the organization of similar committees elsewhere. The economic section undertook the organization of student farm-labor squads, but during the first year it was able to satisfy only about 20 per cent of the demand. It organized courses of instruction for skilled mechanics at the Moscow Agricultural Institute, the Moscow Society of Agriculture, and the Voronezh Agricultural Institute. Those graduating from the courses found employment with the zemstvos but their number did not exceed 59 per cent of the demand.

CHAPTER IX

RELIEF OF REFUGEES[1]

First Measures.

Among the calamities due to the War [wrote in October, 1915, one of the doctors employed by the Union of Zemstvos[2]] the problem of refugees is particularly pressing. Suddenly driven from their homes, millions of people found themselves in the most miserable and distressing conditions. Lack of food and shelter very soon began to exert their fatal effects upon these migrating hordes. Anyone who has had the opportunity of spending some time amongst the refugees must have observed the extraordinarily high rate of sickness and mortality. Wherever a convoy of refugees halted even for a very short period, they always left behind a number of fresh graves, and in some of these improvised cemeteries there may be found a hundred or more new crosses. In addition to epidemics, including cholera, which had been taking heavy toll among them, diseases due to undernourishment occupy an important place. It is evident that they find easy victims among those of weaker constitution, but more particularly among the children.

These words were written in October, 1915, but the Zemstvo Union had occasion long before that date to deal with the sufferings of the refugees. The first refugees (from the province of Kalish) made their appearance in central Russia very soon after the outbreak of the War. The Ekaterinoslav provincial zemstvo board reported that during the first few months of 1915, "a number of expelled Germans and Jews arrived in the districts of Mariupol, Bakhmut, and Slavyanoserbsk." At the close of April and the beginning of May vast numbers of Austrian Ruthenians abandoned their homes and followed in the wake of the retreating Russian troops. At Lvov, Tarnopol, and Kiev regular camps of refugees were established, and as the Austro-German armies advanced there was a corresponding

[1] On the work of the Union of Towns in respect to refugee relief *see* Astrov, *The Effects of the War upon Russian Municipal Government and the All-Russian Union of Towns,* Chapter IX, in the volume *The War and the Russian Government* (Yale University Press, 1929) in this series of the *Economic and Social History of the World War.*

[2] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 40, p. 112.

increase in the number of refugees. They appeared not only in the south but also in the north, so that on June 2 and 11, 1915, conferences of the two unions were called at Smolensk to consider the situation and draft plans to meet the emergency. At that time the unions were the only organizations capable of handling the problem of refugees. The Zemstvo Union in particular had at its disposal a dense network of organs at the front and in the immediate rear of the army working effectively among the civilian population and providing them not only with medical assistance, but also with food. It was natural, therefore, that the first and most difficult steps in caring for the refugees should have been left to the initiative of the unions. After the month of June the civil and military authorities began to appeal to the Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union to take charge of this entire work. In view of the vast expenditure involved, the zemstvos, as well as the local committees of the Union, asked for immediate instructions concerning the methods of work. The Central Committee promptly responded to this urgent demand and directed its organization at the front to take whatever measures might be necessary. At the request of the Central Committee, the Government allocated for the use of the Zemstvo Union considerable funds to meet the initial expenditure.

About the middle of June the movement of the refugees assumed a mass character. The action of local officials and sometimes even the direct orders of the army authorities undoubtedly played a part in the size of the movement. Some of the army commanders had no hesitation in ordering wholesale destruction on the theory that the advancing enemy must find nothing but a desert. Moreover, army authorities felt a strong distrust of certain groups of the population, especially the Jews, and at one time expelled all persons of Jewish faith from a zone twenty miles wide adjoining the front. However, even such measures cannot fully explain the wholesale character of the refugee movements; the fact is that vast masses of refugees left their home spontaneously, in fear of the enemy's invasion. Many of these settled down immediately behind the war zone, hoping for Russian victories which would permit them to return at an early date to their abandoned homes. This class of refugees would often pitch their camps in forests at considerable distances from inhabited places; others, again, would pour into the cities, villages, and railway stations. At times they represented en-

tire communities migrating under the leadership of the village priest, or the village elder or schoolmaster. At other times they were merely panic-stricken mobs. In leaving their homes the refugees tried to carry with them some of their belongings, moving along in disorderly and seemingly endless lines of wagons and other vehicles, surrounded by domestic animals.

Organization of Relief Work.

The work of the zemstvo organizations became more complicated when the refugees had to be moved farther into the interior. There was now the additional burden of finding room for them on the railway trains, helping them to dispose of their cattle and equipment, improving railway facilities, providing food along the road, and establishing isolation hospitals to prevent the spreading of infectious diseases in the interior of the country. Special committees were established for the relief of refugees, and they made arrangements with other organizations working for the relief of the refugees, such as the Union of Towns, the Committee of the Grand Duchess Tatiana, and the various national committees (Polish, Jewish, Lettish, and Lithuanian).

At the end of July, 1915, the Minister of the Interior also took measures for the relief of refugees. He dispatched two assistant ministers to the war zone. One of them organized the so-called "Southern Relief" (*Yugo-Pomoshch*) on the southwestern front and the other established a similar organization, known as the "Northern Relief" (*Severo-Pomoshch*) on the northwestern front.

Apart from the activities of various organizations which came to be gradually formed to deal with the refugee problem, the work of the zemstvo institutions at the front steadily expanded. Along the routes taken by the refugees, whether by rail, water, or road, canteens and dispensaries were established, together with hospitals and temporary shelters for orphans and lost children. The Union's committee of the southwestern front provided also guides, who were instructed to look after the needs of a particular group of refugees, to comfort them, to see that the crowds were properly managed when boarding trains or ships, to protect them in every way, and to see that food and medical care were supplied along the road. The reports of the guides presented a gloomy picture of the migration of

refugees. Railway transport was already breaking down, and the railwaymen, utterly exhausted and exasperated by the demands which were pouring in from all sides, were beginning to feel indifferent toward the fate of the passengers. The supply of the required rolling stock was utterly inadequate. Packed into goods trains, or on open trucks, the refugees traveled at a snail's pace, sometimes not more than thirty miles a day, often compelled to wait five or more hours at some out-of-the-way place where they could obtain nothing in the way of food, and frequently passing during the night, without halting, stations which were well provided with necessaries, thanks to the foresight of the Zemstvo Union. Under these chaotic conditions it was impossible to predict the exact time of arrival of a train, and often, just as the refugees sat down to their meals or as they were being examined by the doctors or being registered, their train would move out of the station without any warning.

Relief in the Front Area.

When the congestion of refugees in the war zone became such as to endanger the movement of the army itself, an order was issued for the compulsory transport of the refugees into the interior. However, the exhausted and emaciated horses were barely able to move, and, in order to put the refugees on board the trains, it became necessary to "relieve" them as quickly as possible of their horses, cattle, vehicles, and other "superfluous" property. Under pressure from the authorities, all these objects were hastily disposed of at prices ridiculously low, falling into the hands of the speculators who made their appearance in large numbers. Frequently property had to be merely abandoned. Under these conditions, the work of the guides, who tried to protect the interests of the refugees, proved exceedingly useful. The guides were selected from among the refugees themselves, being either their priests, teachers, or village elders, and sometimes university students were asked to act as guides.

The zemstvo committees of the front undertook to look after the refugees mainly in the areas adjoining the trenches. But even within this comparatively limited territory the work to be done was considerable. The following figures may afford some idea of its scope: on the southwestern front, the number of meals issued during the period June-December, 1915, by the zemstvo canteens, of which

there were over one hundred in existence, was nearly ten million.[3] On the northwestern front there were established for the benefit of the refugees, as well as of the local population, 48 hospitals with 3,275 beds for infectious diseases, 117 dispensaries, 197 tea rooms, 9 children's homes, 2 asylums for invalids, 4 disinfecting stations, 3 information bureaus, 2 clearing stations, 7 drug stores, 11 dental clinics, 18 night shelters, and 2 burial detachments.[4] The number of canteens fluctuated between 167 and 341 according to requirements. During the brief period October, 1915—July, 1916, the canteens provided refugees and the civilian population with 23,559,000 meals.[5] Those suffering from infectious diseases and registered at dispensaries attached to the canteens, numbered 3,685, while a total of 10,176 were tended in the hospitals. In this way it was possible to isolate without delay a considerable number of acute cases, principally cholera and typhus.

The Financial Problem.

In the meantime large masses of refugees traveling in an easterly direction had made their appearance in the interior. Here, they found no organization whatever and there were no means of arranging for their proper settlement in their new abodes. Nobody knew precisely how many refugees were bound for any given province and no one seemed to know whose business it was to look after them and where the means were to come from for that purpose. The zemstvos and local institutions of the Zemstvo Union asked the Central Committee for funds, and alarming telegrams arrived from a number of provinces, such as Penza, Tambov, Samara, Orel, Poltava, Ekaterinoslav, Vyatka, Orenburg, Simbirsk, and others. From some of the districts requests for funds were addressed to the Zemstvo Union by the highest government officials, as for instance the Governor-General of Kiev, the Governor of Chernigov, and others. Up to August 10, the Central Committee transmitted nearly 500,000 rubles to nine different committees, besides granting permission to fifteen other committees to spend on relief the loans that had been

[3] The exact figure is 9,863,287. Moreover 40,103 meals were served on Dnieper steamers, *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 47, p. 86.

[4] *Ibid.*, No. 28, p. 89.

[5] *Ibid.*, No. 47, p. 101.

made to them. In the course of the next forty-five days a total sum of about 3,000,000 rubles was allocated to various local committees.

No special funds for the relief of the refugees were however available in the treasury of the Central Committee of the Union, and in view of the existing emergency provision had to be made by borrowing from some other sources. On more than one occasion the President of the Union made urgent representations to the Ministry of the Interior for an emergency credit, but none of these telegrams elicited a reply. For the entire period only 500,000 rubles were granted by the Government to each of the two unions. On August 13 an official of the Ministry at last informed Prince Lvov that the question was being considered by the competent authorities and that no funds had as yet been assigned. At last, on September 21, the Zemstvo Union obtained an additional grant of 900,000 rubles, and, receiving no answer to his persistent requests, Prince Lvov was compelled on October 1 to telegraph to the Minister as follows: "In case we do not receive within the next few days the credit requested, the Zemstvo Union will be forced to discontinue its work for the relief of refugees."

Organization Proposed by the Union of Zemstvos and the Special Council.

On September 7 to 9, 1915, a conference of commissioners of the Zemstvo Union met at Moscow and discussed the problem of refugee relief. The meeting came to the conclusion that it was the duty of the Government to support the refugees and that it could be done successfully only by coördinating in a proper manner the work of all the public agencies under the auspices of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. The conference gave its approval to the organization of a joint committee to carry out this work, to be composed of an equal number of representatives of the two unions. It was the unanimous opinion of the zemstvo representatives that the funds for this purpose should be allotted through the medium of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns, which would keep in touch with the Government and would distribute the appropriations among the local organs. The conference also drew up a set of instructions for the organization of public health work among the refugees, directing particular attention to the care of their children.

When these resolutions were passed the joint committee for relief

of refugees had already been set up. It had special subcommittees at work for each of the following services: statistical, information, evacuation, settlement of refugees, transport, children's aid, public health, and labor exchange.

On August 5, 1915, the Ministry of the Interior introduced in the Duma a bill "to provide for the needs of the refugees." The bill contained provision for the organization at Petrograd of a Special Council for Refugees which was to be presided over by the Minister of the Interior; locally, the executive functions were to be entrusted to committees acting under the chairmanship and direction of the provincial governors. In the legislative chambers the bill was considerably amended. In its final form it vested all powers for dealing with refugees locally in the municipalities and the zemstvos and it did away with the chairmanship of the provincial governors. However, the law approved by the Emperor on August 30, 1915, provided that the Minister of the Interior should be personally at the head of the entire organization of refugee relief. An advisory body known as the Special Council, a majority of whose members were to be appointed by the Minister, was attached to the Ministry.

The Ministry did by no means contemplate a concentration of refugee relief work under the control of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. At first, the Special Council simply ignored the communications received from the Central Committees of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns, appropriations were delayed, and the question of the participation of the unions in the relief of the refugees was postponed from one meeting to another. To coördinate the work of the many and motley organizations in existence, the Special Council decided to draw up an "instruction for the settlement of the refugees." The elaboration of the instruction dragged on till March 2, 1916, and it introduced considerable changes into the law of August 30, 1915, by creating provincial joint-committees locally under the chairmanship of the governors, a thing that had been vigorously opposed in the Duma as well as in the State Council.[6] As a rule, appropriations granted for local needs had to be submitted to the approval of the governors.

In the course of the lengthy discussions of these new regulations, the attitude of the Government as regards the place to be assigned

[6] The upper house of the Russian legislature.

to the two unions in the work of refugee relief was very clearly manifested. Thus, at one of the meetings of the committee which discussed this scheme, the chairman, von Pleve, Assistant Minister of the Interior, declared:

> The Unions, in their desire to usurp the right of financing the zemstvos in the work of aiding the refugees, are trying to compete with the Ministry of the Interior. But the Unions are sanctioned only as organizations for the relief of the wounded. They have no legal power to act on behalf of zemstvos and towns in refugee relief work. Therefore, we should oppose appropriations of funds to the Union both for legal and political reasons.

It should be noted, however, that the Government never identified itself with the above view, and officially the care of the refugees remained in the hands of the local organs of unions. But in practice the Ministry of the Interior was guided by the principles formulated by von Pleve. Among other things, this had its effect upon the question of a census of refugees. The joint committee of the two unions found it necessary to ascertain the exact numbers of refugees in each province. When the census was already being taken, the Special Council decided that the Committee of the Grand Duchess Tatiana could do this work, and the Minister requested the unions to drop the "experiments that had been started" and at the same time notified the provincial governors of this decision.

The Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union believed the new arrangement detrimental to the best interests of the refugees, since it made it necessary for the zemstvos to apply to Moscow for funds, while the Government refused to advance them; moreover, there was great loss of time and waste of energy, and the union's headquarters at Moscow was already beginning to be criticized. For this reason the Central Committee decided about the middle of November, 1915, to discontinue the application of the instructions which it had received from the conference of commissioners, and recommended to the zemstvos that they should apply direct to the Special Council for funds. It informed of its decision the Minister of the Interior, in a lengthy memorandum which ended with the following statement: "As for the work of the Zemstvo Union in rendering assistance to refugees in the war zone and adjoining provinces, all such measures were taken at the direct request of the military authorities

and the Union will continue to carry them out under the direction of the Central Committee in the same manner and on the same basis as hitherto."[7] The authorities, however, were stubborn, and the joint committee on refugees gradually lost its influence, though it had been able to accomplish a great deal during the first stage of its career. The work of the joint committee was carried on by the following subcommittees:

The subcommittee on evacuation aimed, in the first place, at introducing some system and order into the chaotic stream of the refugees in the interior of the country. It established a network of institutions which provided the refugees with the most essential comforts, helping them to find accommodation on the trains, supplying them with food, warm clothing, and underwear and furnishing freight cars with stoves and firewood. At the end of November, 1915, when the stream of refugees had come almost to a standstill, the subcommittee devoted its attention to the general problem of establishing the refugees in their new homes, endeavoring to coordinate the efforts of the various local organizations. Much work was done in drafting rules and regulations concerning official subventions to the refugees and the circumstances in which the further support of able-bodied men and women might be either curtailed or stopped entirely. Measures were taken to introduce a uniform system of registration; an office was also opened to assist the refugees in recovering the property lost in transit.

The subcommittee on guides succeeded, during the period from September 10 to December 1, 1915, in furnishing guides for 822 railway trains, to look after 1,100,000 refugees. The guides were selected from among the students of colleges and universities; they were coached in public health work, and equipped with portable medical chests for first aid. Altogether, there were 183 guides and 44 nurses. The average cost of the guide service per refugee amounted to only 6¼ copecks.

The subcommittee on information tabulated and elaborated a vast amount of statistical material concerning relatives from whom the refugees had become separated. Information was given on the spot as well as by mail. It was, of course, impossible to satisfy all applicants, but about 30,000 families were nevertheless enabled to obtain information about lost relatives. In addition to this, several

[7] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 28, pp. 58-67.

directories containing the addresses of some 50,000 refugee families were compiled and distributed to local committees.

The subcommittee on refugee children performed a vast amount of work. During the flight of the refugees many children became lost and many others became orphans. All such children were directed to Moscow by the guides or by special agents appointed for the purpose. The subcommittee collaborated with the various national committees and with twelve organizations working for the refugee children. Five clearing stations were established in Moscow, and here the children were registered and given first aid. The subcommittee was kept informed of the vacancies available in the existing homes and asylums, and scores of new institutions of this kind were opened on its initiative and with its financial support. The children were gradually transferred from Moscow to the provinces and distributed amongst the local homes and asylums. By July, 1916, the subcommittee was already maintaining regular contact with 307 asylums scattered all over the country. Orphanages maintained either entirely or partly by the subcommittee numbered sixty-four, with room for 2,794 inmates, and three-quarters of these vacancies were filled. Altogether, about 3,500 children passed through Moscow. About the middle of July, 1916, the subcommittee proceeded to open special asylums for the blind, deaf and dumb, and otherwise afflicted children of refugees.

The labor exchange began to function in the middle of September, 1915. It aimed at concentrating the employment organizations under its own direction and at opening a network of uniform labor exchanges. In the autumn of 1915 a number of labor exchanges under the auspices of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns, the Tatiana Committee, and other organizations displayed considerable activity. The majority of the exchanges naturally devoted themselves to finding employment for the refugees. The central labor exchange divided Russia into ten areas and sent a special instructor into each for the purpose of assisting in the uniform organization of the exchanges, of establishing connections with exchanges already in existence, and of coördinating their work. More than sixty new labor exchanges were opened by the end of the year. The central exchange succeeded in establishing permanent contact with 153 exchanges all over the country. With the collaboration of local

bodies, the central labor exchange expanded its work of regulating local supply and demand, forming large groups of workers for employers applying to the exchanges, studying labor markets and wage conditions. Beginning by serving the needs of refugees only, the central labor exchange gradually extended its activities to the entire labor market and rendered considerable service to Russian agriculture during the season of 1916.

The statistical subcommittee made it its business to ascertain the extent and direction of the movement of refugees and to watch the work of the canteens. Later, it intended also to take a census of refugee families on a uniform plan. The local committees were fully aware of the importance of such a census, and in most of the provinces they took it in accordance with the program laid down by the statistical subcommittees, in spite of all the obstacles placed in their way by the Ministry of the Interior and its local organs.

A Statistical Analysis of the Refugee Movement.

According to the figures obtained by the subcommittee, the number of refugees rose from 105,000 on the first day of registration to 205,000 on October 5, 1915, after which it began to decline rapidly, falling as low as 13,000 on November 5. After this date the decline continued, dropping as low as 2,000 or 3,000 toward the end of November, 1915.[8] Simultaneously the number of refugees served by the canteens also declined.

The statistical subcommittee also published information regarding refugees who had settled down. The number of such refugees on July 1, 1916, was 2,820,031, distributed over sixty-four provinces and territories of European and Asiatic Russia. The wave of this great migration reached the remotest corners of the Empire, Vladivostok on the Pacific and Tashkent in Central Asia. The largest number of refugees settled in new places were discovered in the province of Ekaterinoslav, namely 242,406, of whom about 50,000 had taken up their abode in the city of Ekaterinoslav itself, numbers equal respectively to 7.01 per cent of the native population of the entire province and 23.7 per cent of the residents of the city. The lowest percentage of refugees was found in Bessarabia,

[8] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, No. 32, p. 99.

namely 0.14 per cent. In the whole of European Russia, 2,625,806 refugees settled, and of this number 552,714 took up their residence in the provincial towns, constituting 21 per cent of the total number. A comparatively small number of refugees, 76,949, went as far as Siberia. Still fewer, 38,518, made their way to Central Asia, and fewest of all, 23,758, to the Caucasus.[9]

By nationality, refugees were distributed as follows: Russians, 57.9 per cent; Poles, 14.2 per cent; Letts, 9.8; Jews, 6.3 per cent; Lithuanians, 2.8; others, 9 per cent.[10]

As regards the provinces of origin of the refugees, information was available only in 806,000 cases. In the first place came the province Grodno with 30.6 per cent of the total number of refugees; then followed Volhynia with 24.07 per cent, Kholm with 11.13 per cent, and Kovno with 6 per cent. The total number of refugees registered from Poland was only 6.46 per cent, and from Galicia, 3.39 per cent. The remaining provinces furnished between 0.16 per cent (Bessarabia) and 4.82 per cent (Minsk).[11] The overwhelming majority of refugees consisted of women, children, and the aged. Adult males constituted only 22 per cent of the total. It should not be thought, however, that even these males were fully capable of performing hard physical labor. The fact was that a considerable number of the men were sick and all of them were utterly exhausted and undernourished. However, the vast majority, having been forced to abandon their homes at a moment's notice, and having lost all they had in the world, finding themselves in strange places without future prospects, and having suffered untold hardships, had lost all energy and simply given up the struggle in hopeless resignation. The total number of refugees mentioned above cannot be considered exact. Subsequent figures would appear to bring the total number of refugees settled in new places as high as 3,200,000. It was even advanced, although without sufficient proofs, that the total number of refugees must have been between 10,000,000 and 15,000,000.[12]

[9] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 45-46, p. 129.

[10] *Ibid.*, No. 47, pp. 84-85.

[11] *Ibid.*, Nos. 43-44, p. 121.

[12] *Trudi* (*Proceedings*) of the Commission for the Investigation of the Effects on Public Health of the War of 1914-1920, Moscow, 1923.

Settlement of Refugees.

We must now inquire how the organs of the Government and the two unions succeeded in discharging the extremely difficult task of settling the refugees in new homes.

In certain localities (Tambov, Ufa, Saratov, and Ekaterinoslav) the provincial governors displayed some initiative in the work of relief. But in the overwhelming majority of provinces the initiative was taken by the provincial zemstvo boards or the local committees of the Zemstvo Union. At first, there seemed to be no competition or rivalry among different authorities in the presence of this terrible national calamity. Here and there local organs of the Committee of the Grand Duchess Tatiana were already at work. These committees had an official character and were usually presided over by the provincial governors. How remote the very idea of competition was at this period from the minds of the authorities may be seen from the very first steps that were taken by the governor of Saratov. On July 31, 1915, he requested all district zemstvo boards to organize branches of the Tatiana Committee and to invite representatives of the zemstvos and municipalities and other persons, at their discretion, to take part in the work of these branches. The result was that Tatiana committees were opened up in some districts and zemstvo committees in others. Wherever the zemstvos took the initiative they became the rallying centers of the work. They urged the local organs of the Tatiana Committee and of the organizations of the various nationalities (Polish, Lithuanian, Lettish, and Jewish) to unite with them, as well as the coöperative societies. Everywhere the need was felt to expand the already existing organization, to infuse new life in it.

At first there were two fundamental difficulties in the way. In the first place, there were no funds available, and then reliable information was lacking as to the number of refugees on the way to each given province. No information was forthcoming from Petrograd or from the front to guide local authorities. Everyone was looking toward the Unions of the Zemstvos and of Towns in the hope that the headquarters at Moscow would send money and instructions. As we have already seen, in the early days not only the zemstvos and the organs of the Union of Zemstvos, but even the government officials, provincial governors included, were in the habit of applying to

the Central Committee of the Union for help. Locally, an intensive organizing campaign was already in full swing and at the outset funds were advanced from the treasuries of the local government institutions, from credits granted by the Zemstvo Union for other purposes, and from special funds urgently sent from Moscow.

A large number of provinces (Kharkov, Tambov, Yaroslav, Saratov, Ekaterinoslav, Vladimir, Ufa, and many others) had completed the elaboration of plans for the relief of refugees as early as August, frequently dealing with the minutest details.[13] While there were some slight differences in the composition of the local committees the practical program was everywhere nearly uniform.

The refugees arriving in a given province were directed to a clearing station for registration and medical examination. The sick were admitted to the hospitals and the rest were sent on toward their destination. Clearing stations were established mainly at important railway junctions or in towns situated along the main routes followed by the refugees. Upon arrival at their destination the refugees came under the jurisdiction of the local rural bodies which, while functioning under different names and with different compositions, were all combined under the general direction of the local committees of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns or of the district zemstvo board. At some places special zemstvo agents were appointed to supervise the work of the smaller units. The distribution of refugees was made either in proportion to the number of households, as, for instance, in the province of Kazan, or on a percentage basis with reference to the total local population, or, lastly, in accordance with available accommodation and the ability of the residents to provide for the needs of the refugees. In the first place all the vacant public buildings were used for this purpose, such as school buildings, government liquor depots, besides uninhabited buildings in country estates and unused factories. The next step was to distribute the remaining refugees in the homes of the peasants who were paid for their maintenance. Local organizations were also required to watch over the condition of the refugees, and in case of need the latter were supplied with food and shelter at government expense. Underwear, shoes, and other articles of clothing

[13] For the plan of the provincial zemstvo of Vladimir, see *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 25, pp. 101-107; the plan of the district zemstvo of Ekaterinoslav, *ibid.*, No. 27, pp. 141-149.

were issued to them at the expense of the zemstvos and private charities.[14]

The whole organization of relief was designed according to a simple but effective scheme. The Government examined and approved the budgets submitted by the Central Committees of the two unions and granted credits. The Central Committees studied the estimates of the local institutions, reduced them to uniformity, settled disputed points and coördinated the whole work of relief and of accounting, just as in the case of relief for the sick and wounded soldiers. It was the duty of the provincial committees on refugees to distribute the latter within the province, to organize the campaign against epidemics, to coördinate the activities of different organizations working in the same field, and to regulate and control the work of the district organizations. The enlarged district zemstvo boards and district committees of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns had similar duties within the limits of the district. The small local organizations were expected to carry out the immediate work of relief; investigate the needs of the refugees and report them on the special forms provided by Moscow; supply them with shelter, fuel, clothing, underwear, and boots; feed the invalids and children; find employment for those able to work; provide hospital accommodation for the sick; furnish information regarding outbreaks of epidemics; collect and send to the district towns the orphans and lost children; and so forth.

Unfortunately, this excellent scheme was not destined to be carried out in practice. As early as September and the beginning of October, 1915, the work of the provincial committees was in many places completely paralyzed by the unorganized movement of refugees and the lack of funds. The following two examples will serve to illustrate the situation. On October 1, the provincial zemstvo board of Ufa telegraphed to the Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union:

> We are in the position to accommodate only 1,000 persons a day, whereas 8,000 to 10,000 are arriving; the situation is terrible; sharp frost has set in; the refugees, poorly clad, barefooted, are being transported in unheated trucks; the existing canteens are utterly inadequate and entire trainloads are being dispatched without food, while the medical staff has no opportunity to examine them.

[14] *Ibid.*, No. 25, pp. 93-100.

The provincial zemstvo board of Ekaterinoslav reported that it had already spent 360,000 rubles, and requested the immediate remittance of an enormous sum, its expenditure for refugees being close on 2,000,000 rubles a month. Again, on October 3, the following telegram was received from the provincial zemstvo board of Samara: "No money; refugees arriving continuously; if no credits, assistance will cease." Similar telegrams were being received from all parts of the country, while the Zemstvo Union was as yet in no position to send any money. Its resources having come to an end, it advised local committees to apply direct to the Special Council. But even then no improvement took place, since the very method of allocating funds still remained undetermined.

Interference of the Government.

The Special Council on Refugees worked out no uniform general scheme of relief for refugees, and funds were distributed among the organizations without due regard to their actual needs. Matters of principle simply had to be settled as they arose from day to day, while the financial commission was busy examining local estimates and budgets. These estimates were compiled in various ways; some organizations were serving the needs of a large number of areas in respect to some particular branch of relief, while others, again, supplied all kinds of relief within a limited territorial unit, such as a district or a province. The consequence was a situation of constant conflict, the proper settlement of which presented considerable difficulty. Some refugees would thus obtain the same relief on more than one occasion while others might possibly be left without any relief whatever. The very principles on which the relief work was based also differed according to locality. Thus, some organizations would issue rations to all the refugees, while others would issue them to those unable to work. Again, in one and the same locality rations might be reduced for large families, while other organizations would have a uniform ration for everybody; some organizations would take into account the government allowance received by the refugee dependents of mobilized men, while others would not; some organizations did and others did not furnish clothing, and so on.

A great deal of time was required to coördinate the conflicting estimates. As a general rule, they would not be examined during the

months which had been appointed for that purpose, but a month or two later, at earliest. It was necessary, therefore, to issue advances, but this could not possibly satisfy all demands and merely tended to introduce a state of nervousness and uncertainty into the whole business. Moreover, there were inexplicable delays in the remittance of such funds as had been appropriated. Thus, on January 16, 1915, a credit of 40,000 rubles had been sanctioned for the governor of Yaroslav, but the money was actually transmitted on March 9; on January 27, the sum of 30,000 rubles was appropriated for the governor of Novgorod, to be forwarded only on February 26; on January 27 the governor of Poltava was allowed the sum of 100,000 rubles, but it was not received until March 2. Numberless instances of this kind might be cited.

We have not space to go into the technical details which were responsible for the delays in the approval of estimates at Petrograd. It will be sufficient to point out that any budget was in danger of being rejected by the Special Council on purely formal grounds.

The Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns received endless complaints about the lack of funds, while refugees were left for months and months without food and rent allowance, and frequently suffered actual starvation. The local population, who at first had generally shown a hospitable disposition toward the refugees, gradually changed their attitude when they saw that they had to deal with people incapable of paying their rent or buying food. Sorely tried by these clamoring, starving masses, the members of the relief committees simply deserted their posts and refused to discharge their duties. In many districts the situation became desperate and there were fears of disorders and riots. The provincial committee of Ekaterinoslav called the attention of the governor to the total lack of funds and the desperate situation on not less than eighteen different occasions between September 1, 1915, and February 11, 1916. Repeated complaints of a similar nature were being made by the representatives of the unions in the provinces of Tambov, Kostroma, Samara, Kazan, Simbirsk, and many others.

In another respect also the relief work proved exceedingly difficult. At the request of the Duma, all the work of refugee relief had, by the law of August 30, 1915, been handed over to the zemstvos and municipalities, which had been granted full independence in the matter of organizing the work locally. In practice this independence

was being encroached upon more and more by the orders of the Minister of the Interior. Thus, on November, 1915, the whole Empire was divided into twelve areas and in each of these the Ministry appointed a special High Commissioner—endowed with very wide powers "for the unification of the work of the local organizations." Under the "instruction" prepared by the Special Council and approved by the Minister on March 2, 1915, a similar task of "unification" was given to the governors who, contrary to the law of August 30, 1915, were placed at the head of the provincial committees. This multiplication of authorities resulted in bitter conflicts.[15]

The proverb says that too many cooks spoil the broth. The conditions of Russian life were such as to complicate the already perplexing problem of refugee relief to such an extent that the unions and unofficial organizations, who were at first quite prepared to cooperate loyally among themselves and with the Government, found themselves in the end utterly disunited, competing with each other, and openly in opposition to the Government. Naturally, those who suffered most from this situation were the unfortunate refugees.

[15] See *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 41-42, pp. 105-119; also *ibid.*, No. 40, pp. 103-113.

CHAPTER X

PARTICIPATION OF THE ZEMSTVOS IN THE WORK OF SUPPLY[1]

Rise in Prices.

During the first year of the War the problem of food supply in Russia presented no serious difficulties. Toward the end of 1915, however, prices of all food products began to rise rapidly[2] and continued uninterruptedly. The campaign against the high cost of foodstuffs was left largely to the municipalities. The history of this campaign will be found in another volume of this series.[3] For the

[1] For the work of the Union of Zemstvos in supplying the army with articles of military equipment, *see* below, Chapter XIII.

[2] The Special Council on Food Supply, which undertook an investigation of prices in sixty-two markets of the Empire and completed the tabulation for the months of October, November, and December, 1915, found that the rise in prices for the most important foodstuffs was exhibited by the following figures:

Index Numbers of Prices.

Foodstuffs	*December, 1914*	*December, 1915*
	(*Prices in December, 1913 = 100*)	
Wheat	107.9	162.2
Wheat flour	107.2	150.9
Rye	133.6	178.6
Rye flour	127.0	180.9
Buckwheat grits	148.6	222.7
Millet	145.1	200.8
Meat	94.8	136.7
Butter	106.0	195.4
Salt	140.3	242.8
Lump sugar	116.6	155.6
Granulated sugar	107.4	144.9
Average	121.2	179.2

Izvestia (*Bulletin*), No. 33, p. 175.

[3] Astrov, *The Effects of the War upon Russian Municipal Government and the All-Russian Union of Towns* in the volume *The War and the Russian Government* (Yale University Press, 1929); also Struve, *Food Supply in Russia during the War* (Yale University Press, 1930), in this series of the *Economic and Social History of the World War.*

zemstvos and the rural communities which they represented, the problem of the rise in the cost of foodstuffs was naturally less acute; upon the whole, the peasantry during the War were accumulating an abundance of money. According to some calculations, the prohibition of liquor alone had yielded to the peasants a cash surplus of nearly 1,000,000,000 rubles a year. To this must be added the government separation allowances, which gave them 500,000,000 rubles in the first year of the War and something like 1,000,000,000 rubles in 1916. Furthermore, the peasants benefited by the higher grain prices, although it is true that in the north the peasants, even before the War, had not been producing sufficient grain for their own needs and were obliged to make additional purchases. Yet it so happened that grain prices were mounting more rapidly in the north than in the south; for instance the price of wheat flour in December, 1915, was 2.63 rubles per pud in Kiev, and 3.48 rubles in Moscow.

Under normal conditions the increased flow of money into the rural communities, coupled with the reduction in the rural population due to the calling of a large number of men to the army, would probably have afforded compensation for the increase in the grain prices even in the north. The difficulty, however, was in the distribution of foodstuffs. Russia as a whole had, it is true, sufficient supplies of grain available, and, as regards the apprehension of a disastrous reduction in the cultivated area, it was soon found to have been exaggerated. Poor harvests in certain localities were offset by the fact that the normal peace-time exports of grain to foreign countries had ceased with the outbreak of hostilities. Unfortunately, in order to transport the grain to the places where it was urgently required, "almost insurmountable difficulties," as the Yaroslav provincial zemstvo board put it in one of its reports, had to be overcome. Railway facilities for the transport of grain were inadequate even in time of peace. Now, under war conditions, they had become completely disorganized and were able to satisfy only a very small proportion of the needs of the civilian population. Moreover, the numerous conflicting orders issued by government commissioners were interfering with regular traffic. No uniform plan was anywhere in evidence. There were frequent changes among the officials in charge of the food supply organization and the local work was greatly complicated in consequence. Government officials were work-

ing now under the direction of one chief, now under that of another, with the result that there was competition and constant friction among the government departments. The Government placed its reliance upon the efficiency of the authorities rather than upon any clearly-thought-out policy. This disorganization of transport, in addition to the stringent regulations affecting separate localities, did much to undermine the foundations of private business and introduced into it an element of uncertainty and speculation.

Shortage of Foodstuffs.

In these circumstances, not alone the cities and towns but also the rural districts in the consuming areas, began to experience an acute food shortage. Not only individual buyers, but even coöperative societies began to find it impossible to obtain the foodstuffs that they required, and the zemstvos had to take measures to supply the deficiency. The food shortage was not always confined to the consuming provinces in the north; the producing provinces likewise suffered from the same distress, as may be seen from the following instance.

In 1916 flour millers in the province of Taurida who had "unlimited supplies of grain" were forced to close down sixty-eight mills and to curtail operations in ninety-eight others for lack of fuel, and the result was a reduction of 7,400 puds in the daily output in this province alone. At the same time the millers in the neighboring provinces, in spite of the fact that they were supplied with a practically unlimited amount of coal from the local Donets mines, were compelled to curtail production for lack of grain.[4]

All provinces suffered in equal measure from a shortage of articles of prime necessity other than foodstuffs. The unfavorable conditions under which manufactured goods were distributed in the rural districts were felt keenly by the peasants and sometimes even forced them to refuse to dispose of their grain for cash. They were dissatisfied, moreover, with the speculative inflation of the prices of such articles. Sometimes the peasants would openly protest against the fixing of the price of grain when the price of other articles of prime necessity which they were obliged to buy, remained uncontrolled.[5]

[4] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 39, p. 197.
[5] *Ibid.*, No. 40, pp. 207-208.

Measures Taken by the Zemstvos.

Under these circumstances the zemstvos in nearly all provinces found themselves compelled to help the rural population to obtain commodities, such as sugar, kerosene, matches, soap, nails, steel and iron goods, textiles, and a variety of other articles. There was another reason why the zemstvos desired to undertake this work. In many district towns an acute scarcity was experienced in the most indispensable articles, but the authorities did not everywhere prove sufficiently enterprising to organize an independent system of supply of such articles. It was important either to insist that these authorities should do something quickly, or to assume the entire burden of procuring the necessary articles for the population of both town and country through the zemstvos. At the outset many zemstvos took a rather simple view of the high cost of living and of the way in which it ought to be combated. First of all they emphasized the importance of such methods as price regulation, prosecution of speculation, control of shopkeepers' and traders' stocks, requisitions, and measures to influence the banks, which were said to be encouraging speculation. Later, having lost confidence in the effectiveness of such measures, the zemstvos took the view that the campaign should be conducted not so much against the high prices as against the scarcity of commodities. The organization of wholesale purchases was now considered as the most important problem, and, in view of the vast reduction in the number of small traders, it was proposed to encourage coöperative societies. Accordingly, the representatives of the coöperative organizations were enlisted to take part in the campaign and in the discussions of plans and methods. They also investigated the requirements of each area within their district, attended to the local distribution of the commodities, and obtained large loans to enable them to buy the goods supplied by the zemstvos. In some places, where the coöperative movement was still undeveloped, the zemstvos went so far as to endeavor to organize cooperative societies. At the same time they did not hesitate to utilize any other local distributing agencies; they also dealt with private merchants, although the latter were given assistance only on condition that they agreed to submit to the supervision of the smaller volost organizations. The latter were known by various names, such as volost food councils, food committees, food subcommittees, control

committees, trade commissions, etc. All of them were originally created for the relief of the wounded, families of mobilized men, and refugees. Other social groups, such as merchants and leaders of cooperative societies were now enlisted in the effort to keep down the cost of living.

The nature of the organization was determined by local conditions. In some provinces only the provincial zemstvos did the buying, leaving the distribution of the goods to the district zemstvos; in other localities the entire operation was performed by the district zemstvo, while elsewhere certain commodities might be purchased either by the provincial zemstvo board or district zemstvo board, as was the case in the province of Yaroslav. Some volost organizations would investigate the demand within their area and distribute commodities accordingly; others would supervise the merchants engaged in the distribution, and still others would take part in the purchasing operations. Zemstvo organizations of a commercial character, such as warehouses for steel, iron, agricultural implements, and similar articles, were also used for this purpose, in such a way that headquarters would do the buying while the branches would attend to the distribution. A highly important part was also played by the zemstvo funds (banks), and in many places these institutions were given full charge of the purchasing operations.

Financing Operations of Supply.

The funds for the purchasing operations were provided in part by the zemstvos and in part by the Government, and, lastly, by the banks. The operations were conducted with a view to avoiding losses; that is to say, goods were sold at cost price plus a charge for overhead expenses and interest on loans.

Government loans were issued either in kind or in cash. Thus, from August 1, 1915, to May 17, 1917, the zemstvos received from the army stores of the Ministry of Agriculture, a total of 986,000 puds of rye, wheat, and flour, 492,000 puds of grits, and 3,196,000 puds of oats and barley, for distribution among the civilian population to be used partly as food and fodder and partly as seed. The funds advanced by the Government to the zemstvos likewise ran into very large sums. Until the autumn of 1915 these advances were made out of a special food supply fund already established before the War. After this source had been exhausted the Government al-

located to the Special Council on Food Supply a sum of 30,000,000 rubles for the supply of foodstuffs to the population, and this fund was used to grant loans to the institutions of local government. Up to February 5, 1916, the sum of 3,510,000 rubles had been advanced from it to 9 provincial and 50 district zemstvos. By May 4, 1916, the number of zemstvos which had obtained loans from the Special Council had already risen to 88, and if we add to this number those zemstvos which had previously obtained loans out of the pre-war food supply fund, we obtain a total of 120 out of a grand total of 483 provincial and district zemstvos.

By the beginning of 1917, the food supply operations of the zemstvos had developed to such an extent that neither their own appropriations nor the government loans sufficed any longer to finance them. The zemstvos found themselves compelled to seek large short-term loans from private banks. Such loans were concluded in the majority of cases under government guarantee.

Operating capital for the purchase and the distribution of supplies reached considerable sums and steadily increased. Thus, the provincial zemstvo of Kostroma bought between September 1, 1915, and September 1, 1916, goods to the value of 3,655,224 rubles, and sold goods to the value of 3,775,621 rubles; in the course of the next three months it was able to sell goods to the value of 2,001,318 rubles.

The figures of the appropriations, loans, and government advances varied greatly as between the different zemstvos. Naturally, the zemstvos in the north, having to supply the population with grain as well as other commodities, had to spend more money than those in the south, where the problem of food supply had not yet arisen. Thus, we find that the provincial zemstvo of Tver received from the Government a loan of 500,000 rubles; that of Vladimir of 75,000 rubles; the district zemstvo of Yurev in the province of Kostroma of 48,000 rubles; that of Uglich in the province of Podolia of 50,000 rubles; that of Lipetsk in the province of Tambov of 25,000 rubles; and so forth.

The Moscow provincial zemstvo was the first to undertake the supply of foodstuffs to the civilian population, doing this as early as in May, 1916. Foreseeing an increase of prices in the near future, this zemstvo appropriated 1,000,000 rubles for the purchase of flour and other foodstuffs. Its example was soon followed by other

provincial zemstvos in the north. Thus, the zemstvo of Vladimir assigned for a similar purpose the sum of 650,000 rubles in July, 1915, while the zemstvo of Petrograd made an appropriation of 4,400,000 rubles.

As a typical example of the organization of the food supply for the civilian population, we may quote here a resolution adopted by the zemstvo assembly of Temnikov (province of Tambov) on December 9, 1916. By this resolution it was decided (1) to apply for a loan from credits granted to the Special Council on Food Supply, of the amount of 100,000 rubles, with the object of combating the high cost of living; (2) to leave it to the discretion of the board to organize the purchase and distribution and to increase the stocks of articles of prime necessity with a view to their sale at cost price through the medium of the local coöperative stores, agricultural loan societies, and zemstvo warehouses; (3) to permit the zemstvo funds to extend credits to the consumers' coöperative societies; and, (4) in the event of the Government's refusal to grant the loan, to obtain a short-term loan of 100,000 rubles from the municipal and zemstvo banks.

The food supply work of the zemstvos and their Union was carried out by the provincial and district zemstvos. The committees of the Union took little part in it. The Central Committee of the Zemstvo Union concerned itself with this problem only in the second half of 1916, when a subcommittee was instructed to work out a detailed plan of food supply. This subcommittee, however, was the last to be organized, and as it operated only for a few months prior to the Revolution it succeeded in accomplishing very little. It organized a representation of the Zemstvo Union in all commissions of the Special Council on Food Supply. These representatives then combined into a separate committee, to which a secretariat at Petrograd was attached. A special bureau was also set up at Petrograd to make sure that the food supply measures of the zemstvos received proper consideration in the Special Council and other government institutions. Instructors were trained, to be placed at the disposal of the local food supply organizations, and several zemstvo conferences on food supply were held. They discussed various economic problems and prepared valuable reports dealing with the organization of supply.[6]

[6] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, Nos. 52-53, pp. 31-32.

Participation in the Provisioning of the Army.

By an order of the Council of Ministers issued on July 30, 1914, the purchase of foodstuffs, which had been one of the functions of the Ministry of Agriculture, was locally entrusted to regional and provincial commissioners, who were subject to the authority of the Minister of Agriculture and appointed by him. This order of the Council of Ministers provided that "in case the zemstvo institutions and other bodies should take part in the purchasing operations, they may appoint in each province their representatives, who shall become members of the receiving commissions which shall also include members of the provincial zemstvo boards."

The intention of this order was to dispense with the zemstvos in the purchasing operations and to allow their collaboration only in case of absolute necessity. In practice, however, most of the commissioners were appointed by the Minister of Agriculture from among the chairmen of the zemstvo boards. In those instances where the commissioners in the zemstvo provinces did not belong to the zemstvos they invariably had representatives of the local government among the members of their councils. Consequently, in a majority of zemstvo provinces where purchasing operations were being conducted, a very considerable share of the work was done under the direction of the member of the zemstvos, while the purchasing organizations were being formed by the zemstvo board. Furthermore, the Government made a practice of inviting zemstvo representatives to conferences devoted to the problems of provisioning the army and the cities and the fixation of prices.

The law of November 29, 1916, which established the compulsory levy of the grain required by the army,[7] provided that in zemstvo provinces such levies could be apportioned among the districts by the provincial zemstvo boards, if they consented to undertake this work, while the district zemstvo boards were to apportion the quantity of grain for which the district was liable among individual landowners and peasant communities. The levy was to operate in thirty-four zemstvo provinces. The question whether they should take part in the carrying out of this scheme, which in most cases met with a hostile reception by the farmers, provoked heated debates

[7] For a detailed treatment *see* Struve, *op. cit.*

in the zemstvo assemblies. The matter was further complicated because, in the opinion of numerous zemstvos, the assessment had not been properly distributed, for they believed that the Government had failed to take into account the fact that, prior to the promulgation of the law of November 29, the system of wholesale grain purchases was by no means uniform, so that the balance of grain remaining over from the preceding harvest had no relation to the total amount of grain harvested, which was used as the basis for the assessment. Finally, after a number of changes had been made in the original scheme, thirty provincial zemstvos consented to support it, only four declining to accept the responsibility. In 1916 the zemstvos also took part in the elaboration of a scale of fixed prices for cattle requisitioned for the army, besides taking charge of the requisitioning operations and the delivery of the cattle to the army.

After the Revolution the local commissioners of the Minister of Agriculture were replaced by committees in which the leading part was played by the chairmen and members of zemstvo boards. These food supply committees carried into effect the grain monopoly which was inaugurated by the Provisional Government in March, 1917.

We shall not dwell here in detail upon the organization of the purchasing operations which the reader will find in another volume of this series.[8] We shall confine ourselves to noting the fact that the share taken by the zemstvos in this most important task was very extensive. The zemstvos, however, did not limit their work in this field to a participation in the official organization for collecting the supplies. Some of them on their own initiative in 1914 and in 1915, when neither grain levy nor cattle requisition was as yet in operation, undertook to provide foodstuffs for the army. The extent of this work may be gathered from the following illustrations. The district zemstvo of Khorson had assembled 9,202,761 puds of rye, wheat, and barley by January 1, 1916. The district zemstvo of Odessa provided 1,476,134 puds of grain by the autumn of 1914, and by the autumn of 1915, 782,597 puds of barley, 59,615 puds of wheat, 20,763 puds of millet, and 5,969 puds of oats. The Stavropol provincial zemstvo board within one year (October 25, 1914—September 1, 1915) delivered 926,703 puds of barley and wheat. The district zemstvo of Ossa in the province of Perm had collected nearly

[8] *See* Struve, *op. cit.*

3,000,000 puds of cereals by October, 1915. The zemstvos of Tver, Urzhum, Konstantinograd, Alexandria, Vologda, and many others collected large quantities of hay and had it baled.

The zemstvos also undertook more complicated work in connection with the provisioning of the army. Thus, the provincial zemstvo of Poltava as early as 1915 entered into a large contract for the delivery of pork and bacon, at the request of the Government. The district zemstvo board bought live pigs and delivered them to the slaughterhouses which were established throughout the province under the supervision of zemstvo experts, and the pickling of meat and bacon was carried out on a very large scale. Many zemstvos for instance Moscow, Kharkov, and Nizhni-Novgorod undertook to preserve vegetables for the needs of the army. Vegetable plots would be leased, sometimes as many as 300 to 600 deciatines in one district, and all vegetables grown on this land would be sent to drying plants specially built by the zemstvos. Thus, the district zemstvo of Volchansk had at its disposal about 300 deciatines of such vegetable farms, opened fourteen drying plants, and supplied up to 50,000 puds of dried vegetables a year.

Army Equipment.

It has been pointed out previously that the Central Committee of the Union was compelled from the outset to organize the purchasing of supplies on a vast scale. At first it had in view solely the needs of its own institutions, but later found it necessary to come to the assistance of the Army Supply Department. In accepting important and urgent orders for underwear, warm clothes, and boots, the Central Committee confidently expected the coöperation of the zemstvo boards and of the local committees of the Union. In these expectations it was not disappointed, and it received every possible assistance.

Altogether, twenty-one zemstvos took part in helping the Union to supply the army with winter boots, peltry, woolen and cotton underwear, homespun linen made by the peasants, and other articles. The part of some zemstvos consisted in helping to assemble what had already been purchased by the Union. Some zemstvos bought articles of clothing at the request of the Union and also organized the local production of fur coats, wadded blouses, and boots. The district boards of Shuya and Kovrov, for example, or-

ganized the production of fur coats and other clothing from sheep skins bought by the Union. The provincial zemstvo board of Kaluga organized the manufacture by the peasantry of wadded blouses lined with cloth; the provincial zemstvo board of Tver undertook to supply 150,000 to 200,000 pair of army boots, and so on. In the manufacturing of boots the zemstvos resorted to various methods and where necessary, large up-to-date factories were established, equipped with the latest machinery, special workshops were opened, the work being also given out to cottage workers, and these were sometimes combined into large associations, which were under the supervision of zemstvo experts.

The production of underwear was at first concentrated chiefly in the city of Moscow, but gradually extended to the districts in Moscow province. By December, 1916, the committees of the Zemstvo Union in eleven provinces had also undertaken this kind of work and opened 243 workshops employing 50,000 women.

After the middle of 1915, when the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns established a joint committee for the supply of the army, their work was greatly expanded. Thirty-eight provincial zemstvos appointed army supply committees and entrusted them with the production of military equipment, including munitions of war. This work will be considered in Chapter XIII.

CHAPTER XI

WORK IN THE ARMY

Hospital Trains: Organization.

In the middle of August, 1914, a committee of doctors and engineers was working under the auspices of the Union of Zemstvos on the problem of the transport of the wounded. The members of the committee became soon convinced that it would be necessary to resort to the use of ordinary freight cars for the transport of wounded men. Obviously the first thing to be done was to devise an arrangement that would overcome the chief defect of a freight car, namely, the absence of springs. This led to experiments with suspended cots. A little later it was decided that skeleton trains should be equipped which would be able quickly to adapt freight cars and make them to some extent possible for the transport of the sick and wounded. Finally, there was the consideration of cheapness, as well as quickness, in view of the urgency of the needs.

A week later the system of suspended cots was already in operation. A trained hospital orderly could put a car in perfect condition within half an hour. The car would be swept clean and scrubbed with a disinfecting solution. The next step was to erect a small iron stove, with the chimney leading through the window of the car. To the walls of the car there would be fastened, either with screws or nails, wooden props, and on these would be placed beams running across the width of the car, close to the roof. These beams were provided with hooks, to which were attached ropes fastened to metal rings. Into these rings were fitted the wooden handles of what was a combination of cot and stretcher. When the train moved, the ropes acted as springs, rocking gently to and fro. Later on, the soldiers referred to these improvised hospital cots as "cradles" and retained a grateful memory of them.

As for the rest of the equipment, it was simplicity itself. The walls were lined with felt, and small wooden tables were placed in the cars for food and medicine. When loading, two orderlies lifted the wounded arriving from the hospital on the same stretcher which was to serve as his cot while in transit; this cot was then taken into the

car over a gangway and two other orderlies helped to fit the handles of the cot in the proper rings attached to the ropes. These cots were about two feet in width, which made it possible to accommodate twelve in a car, while leaving a passage seven feet wide across the car from one door to another. The cots were placed in two tiers, three in one row, that is, six on each side of the main passage. A freight train consisting of thirty-three cars was calculated to hold 396 cases. In the middle of the train there was a set of cars comprising the kitchen, two supply cars, and one third-class car for the staff. The cost of a train completely equipped was calculated at 14,000 rubles, making 35 rubles per cot. The staff was to consist of two doctors, three junior medical officers, six trained nurses, a superintendent, thirty-four orderlies, two cooks, and the kitchen assistant. The total salaries of the staff were reckoned at 1,685 rubles per month. Each car was to have its own orderly, and one of them was to act as a senior in charge of the others. Each nurse had five to six cars to look after, while each junior medical officer was to attend to ten or eleven cars. As for the doctors, the two divided the train between themselves. Particular attention was to be paid to the feeding of the sick and wounded. The food allowance of the staff was computed on the following basis: the higher staff, numbering twelve, at one ruble a day, and the lower, numbering thirty-seven, at 50 copecks, which made a total of 915 rubles per month. The cost of maintenance of the sick and wounded, calculated at the rate of 50 copecks, on a basis of fifteen days a month per patient, was estimated at 2,970 rubles. All other expenditure, such as that for fuel, light, management, medical supplies, dressing material, equipment, etc., was put at 1,430 rubles. The total cost of maintaining a hospital train therefore amounted to 7,000 rubles a month, or 17 to 18 rubles per cot.

The findings of the committee were reported to the Central Committee of the Union, estimates were scrutinized, and experiments were carried out with the installation of cots in fast trains between Moscow and Podolsk. The Central Committee then approved the recommendations, proceeded to organize a special hospital train department and gave orders to form at once ten such trains for evacuations in the interior of the country. Workshops were opened at Moscow to supply the necessary equipment, and the department next

proceeded to recruit the medical staff. To carry the plan into execution was, however, by no means easy. To begin with, it was impossible shortly after the outbreak of the War to get things done promptly in Moscow. The work was therefore considerably delayed. For instance the Moscow firms were willing to take orders for the metal rings which were to hold the cots in position, but required several months for the purpose. Fortunately, ready-made rings were discovered in some of the towns along the Volga river, where they were used by the fishermen for dragging their nets.

The recruiting of the lower staff also presented considerable difficulties, for the work demanded intelligent, patient, well-disciplined, and strong men. The first ten trains alone required four hundred such persons. The problem was admirably solved by a fortunate accident. The department found that a considerable number of Mennonites had been placed at the disposal of the military authorities for hospital service. The Mennonites were German sectarians living in Russia who had a conscientious objection to war and had steadfastly refused to bear arms ever since their immigration into Russia under Catherine II. The Government had guaranteed them freedom from conscription and in return for this exemption they undertook to serve in the hospitals in case of war. The Zemstvo Union thereupon petitioned the Government to place the Mennonites at its disposal and the Government readily consented that it should hire several hundred Mennonites and see how they would answer the purpose. Having met with a friendly and generous reception, these Mennonites were soon writing cheerful letters home, with the result that many hundreds of Mennonites, in addition to those who were compelled to serve under the obligations they had assumed, enlisted of their own free will in the hospital service of the Union. They were excellent workers and performed their duties conscientiously and gallantly.

We have already stated, in Chapter IV, that the Union of Zemstvos commenced its operations by furnishing special staffs to meet the sick and wounded who were arriving at Moscow in ordinary freight cars in no way adapted for their conveyance and without any attendance, and to accompany them on their way to hospitals in the interior. On August 29, 1914, the first train equipped by the Zemstvo Union was dispatched from Moscow with sick and wounded soldiers to Nizhni-Novgorod. Thus began the system of zemstvo

train services in the so-called "evacuation to the interior" which was to continue throughout the War.

The conditions under which five complete zemstvo trains had at the outset been dispatched to Belostok have already been described.[1] Subsequently, further trains were dispatched from Moscow in sets of five, and the department so expanded its work that it was able, if necessary, to prepare equipment for an entire train at one day's notice. Up to November 10, a total of thirty trains (twenty to Belostok, for the northern front, and ten to Brest for the southern) had been dispatched for the "evacuation from the front." Five trains were operating in the "evacuation to the interior," transporting the casualties from Moscow to points in the interior.

It cannot be said that the first few trains arriving at Belostok received a cordial welcome. At that time the local evacuation authorities could see no urgent necessity for such trains. The idea of packing up and again unpacking hospital trains of the kind previously described was positively rejected, simply because it did not fit into the official forms and methods of evacuation. It required a great deal of tact and patient persistence to obtain a sufficient number of cars. After that came innumerable examinations of the trains (among others, by Prince Oldenburg). At last, it became possible to put the trains to work one after another. An order was issued that they should be permanently kept completely equipped. The obstacles were gradually removed and normal relations established with the competent authorities.

By order of the military authorities, a gradual rearrangement of the rolling stock was proceeding. Among other things, there was an order to include in the trains fifteen fourth-class cars for those slightly injured and one second-class car for the officers. The army authorities were also anxious to provide better facilities for the personnel of the trains. From Moscow the staffs would travel third and fourth class, but in the war zone it was ordered that third-class cars should be provided for the orderlies and second-class for the medical staff. It was naturally only possible to make all these changes gradually, as the required rolling stock became available at Belostok. The Polesie Railways presented the Zemstvo Union with twenty splendidly equipped cars for use in bandaging the wounded. The

[1] *See* above, p. 67.

train staffs quickly accustomed themselves to the new requirements. Among the completely equipped hospital trains, those provided by the zemstvos were the simplest and cheapest; but the excellent care given to the patients, together with the good food and the restful suspended cots, found grateful appreciation by both officers and men, as may be seen from the vast number of letters of thanks received by the Union. In the instructions issued to the doctors in charge of the trains, attention was called to the importance of a proper diet for the sick and wounded irrespective of cost. Nevertheless, during the first few months of the operation of hospital trains the cost of food per patient was only 38 to 42 copecks a day, instead of the 50 copecks allowed for in the estimates.

Upon arrival at their destination, the zemstvo trains were immediately set to work to evacuate casualties from Warsaw, Graev, Suwalki, and Augustovo, during the October battles in these neighborhoods.

Supply of Hospital Trains.

The hospital trains required an uninterrupted supply of necessaries. Three cities were finally decided upon as offering the best natural bases of operations, namely, Moscow, Belostok, and Brest. At the two last-named places administrative offices of the zemstvo agents were opened in railroad cars, trains were repaired, and sick members of the staff received treatment. Accounts were settled, money was received for expenses, patients were given underclothing, and cars and equipment were disinfected. At Moscow the hospital trains received a thorough overhauling and a more complete supply and equipment. As a rule, the trains would be sent to Moscow once in two months. The department took these opportunities to introduce some uniformity into the rather motley composition of the trains and to make good the defects in those trains which reached Moscow in a worse condition than the others. Profiting by experience, the department would from time to time instal better types of kitchens in the fourth-class cars, and furnish them with iceboxes, besides providing bandaging cars of the same type as those which had been presented to the Union by the Polesie Railways. It also established disinfecting rooms, etc. In one train, by way of experiment, a bathroom and laundry were installed. The trains used to arrive at Moscow irregularly, and on occasion several at the same

time. At first, the period of their stay in Moscow was not clearly defined, and the necessary repairs would be done hastily and superficially. With great difficulty the zemstvos succeeded at last in obtaining authorization to keep such trains at Moscow for at least twenty-four hours after unloading.

While improving and repairing the existing trains, the Union was constantly at work providing new ones, so that in May, 1915, a total of forty-eight trains had already been equipped in the workshops (three trains for use on the narrow-gauge Austrian railways were produced in the workshops of Kiev). Side by side with this activity there was a constant reinforcement of the staffs, partly for newly formed trains and partly to replace the sick and discharged members. By December 1, 1914, the hospital trains department of the Unions employed 2,918 men and women, including 99 doctors, 194 junior medical officers, 323 nurses, 60 superintendents, 144 kitchen staff, 2,098 orderlies.

For a considerable portion of this staff, kept in reserve, it was necessary to organize homes at Moscow, one for the medical staff and another for the orderlies. A hospital was also attached to these homes and it was often crowded with patients. In its reports the department speaks not only of a high percentage of sickness among the staffs, but also gives a number of obituaries of orderlies, nurses, and doctors who met their death in the trains, as well as in the hospitals at the front.

In addition to depots for the supply of underwear, clothing, medicines, dressing material, and other articles to the hospital trains, and in addition to the repair shops, the hospital train department found it necessary to organize at Moscow on a gigantic scale the disinfection, cleansing, washing, and mending of underwear brought from the front by the trains and taken from passing soldiers. From the beginning of July, 1915, a special provision depot came into operation at Moscow for the provisioning of departing trains.

Nature of Work.

At the front the hospital trains had very varied experiences. Sometimes a train would be left at a station for weeks and weeks, waiting for orders or progressing slowly over the badly congested lines. At other times there might be feverish and incessant work, and

the wounded would then be loaded and unloaded regularly for weeks at a time. In spite of the fact that the transport of the sick and wounded demanded strenuous labor, almost without sleep from the beginning to the end of a trip, the staff worked with a will, and long delays and inactivity would sometimes produce grumbling and weariness, and at times even cause sickness among them. They showed their eagerness for action in every way, and when they found themselves at the terminal railroad stations at the front, were anxious to penetrate even farther into the danger zone, so as to be able to establish dressing and feeding stations for the wounded men before they reached the railway terminal. They also organized special expeditions to collect the wounded at the front and transport them to the nearest railway line that was in working order. The trains, or at least several cars detached from such trains, manned by members of the staff, would cautiously proceed into the zone of actual fighting at the risk of being fired on or falling into the hands of the enemy. This is how the "flying train-squads" originated which saved the lives and eased the sufferings of large numbers of wounded. These squads were formed and again disbanded as circumstances required. In eastern Prussia, in the sector of Graevo-Lika, railroad carriages taken from the Germans were put together as a permanent narrow-gauge hospital train, which operated during the whole time that the Russian troops remained on enemy territory. In the area of the Mazurian Lakes a horse tramcar service equipped by the Zemstvo Union was used for the transport of the wounded.

The conditions under which zemstvo trains were sometimes compelled to work may be illustrated from a report submitted by the officer commanding Train No. 173. We quote the following passage from this report:

> On February 2, 1915, the train left the station of Belostok at 3 A.M. for the station of Augustovo. At 8 the train was switched on to the Suwalki branch line, over which the last trains from Suwalki and Augustovo were already departing. Only towards evening was it at last possible to approach the station of Augustovo, situated in a spruce forest. At a distance two to three miles before the station the train passed through the Russian line of skirmishers, who had taken up their position on both sides of the track. At this time the enemy was advancing on Augustovo from the opposite side, confining himself to rifle fire. . . . I ordered the superintendent to climb on to the locomotive,

get his revolver ready and keep an eye on the engineer. Assembling the orderlies, I impressed on them the need of loading the train as quickly, yet as quietly as possible. In spite of the darkness which had now fallen, we managed to place the wounded on board our train in twenty minutes. The entire staff was working with extraordinary speed and admirable coolness in spite of the very dangerous situation. The wounded men were carried to the train on stretchers and loaded into the cars by the orderlies, who were cheerfully assisted by the nurses, the latter not hesitating to lift even the heaviest loads. After the loading of the wounded had been finished, refugees were also taken aboard, women and children coming first. By order of the station master, all the railroad officials were taken on board the train, all arms at the station were collected, the telegraph apparatus was taken along, and lastly the troops who had guarded the station were placed on the train. After extinguishing the lights of the locomotive, as well as in carriages, we started back without sending any signals ahead. At a distance of several miles from Augustovo, as we emerged from the forest, we found an abandoned wagon blocking our path. The tender pushed the wagon off the track (as our locomotive was travelling backwards), but at this moment rifle fire was opened on the train from the edge of the forest a few score yards away. The flashes of the rifles showed us plainly that the firing was aimed at us, but fortunately no one was hurt and the train was able to make its way back to the station of Novokamennaya.[2]

Not always, however, did such journeys end quite so successfully. Thus, on January 30, 1915, zemstvo Train No. 189 was captured by the Germans while taking on wounded at Verzbolovo.[3]

Scope of Work.

In June, 1915, fifty zemstvo trains were distributed as follows: on the northwestern front, twenty trains; on the southwestern, ten trains; on the Caucasian front, five trains; in Galicia, five trains; and ten trains in the interior.

This distribution was frequently altered, as the armies moved to and fro. Trains for evacuations to the interior would be increased or reduced in number accordingly. During the first year the number of wounded and sick men transported may be expressed in the following figures: the northwestern and southwestern front, 62.4 per cent; the Galician front, 7.5 per cent; the Caucasian front, 3 per

[2] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 10, pp. 40-42.

[3] A new train was equipped to replace the captured one.

cent; in the interior of the country (east of Moscow), 27.1 per cent. Later there were frequent changes in these proportions. When a complete set of fifty trains was finally provided, they contained 17,555 carriages, including 4 first-class, 20 mixed (first- and second-class), 58 second-class, 111 third-class, and 490 fourth-class carriages, besides 916 heated freight cars and 160 ordinary unheated cars. In the course of 1916 the Union of Zemstvos, at the special request of the military authorities, equipped twenty-six additional trains, so that in 1917 there were seventy-five zemstvo hospital trains in operation. Of these, three were equipped with bathing facilities, disinfection chambers, and others appliances for the treatment and transport of contagious cases. Three trains were fitted out at the expense of the Zemstvo Union for the disinfection and cleansing service, consisting of seven to nine carriages each; special carriages containing a bakery, an ice plant, and a dental hospital were also built. They were attached to the hospital trains of the Union and sent wherever necessary.

The exact number of sick and wounded men evacuated by the trains, as shown by the official records, is known only up to January 1, 1917; by that time the fifty trains of the Union had made altogether 3,360 journeys and carried a total of 1,626,531 men.[4]

We have seen that the evacuation of the sick and wounded from the front during the ten months of 1917 previously mentioned proceeded even more actively than during the period 1914-1916. At that time, seventy-five zemstvo trains, instead of the original fifty were in operation. However, even if we assume the average work done by the seventy-five trains during this period to have been no greater than that observed in 1914-1916, in other words, if we allow for an average of 63,000 patients per month, we shall obtain for the ten months of 1917, 630,000 additional cases transported, making for the entire period of the War a grand total of 2,256,000. This figure is manifestly an underestimate. But even so it is more than one-half of the total number of sick and wounded soldiers evacuated from the front during the thirty-eight months of the War, namely 4,300,000.

The conditions of the patients transported by the zemstvo hospital trains are known only for the first year of their operation and are as follows: seriously wounded, 13.9 per cent; lightly wounded,

[4] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 58-60, p. 81.

54.5 per cent; infectious cases, 2 per cent; and the remainder suffering from various other ailments. The average time spent by each patient in the trains on the western and Caucasian fronts was three days, while in the Galician trains and in the trains evacuating soldiers in the interior of the country the average time was only one-and-a-half days, so that the average for all trains was 2.35 days.

The Hospital Trains and Their Patients.

What were the feelings of the sick and wounded soldiers during their journeys in the zemstvo hospital trains? Evidence on this point is available from a number of letters and reports. Thus, the head surgeon of one of the Caucasian trains wrote as follows:

> It is curious to note how the mental condition of the soldiers developed during the nine days' journey of our train to Rostov-on-Don. During the first day of the journey the patients seemed rather bewildered and indifferent to their surroundings. The second day was devoted almost entirely to eating—eating as only a healthy, hungry man can eat. After that, as they felt more cheerful, there was a complete change in the general atmosphere, and singing and laughter could be heard. At the stations along the road the patients were quite willing to enter into long conversations with curious visitors and spectators, and by the time we reached Rostov they seemed almost completely recovered. This goes to show that a change in the surroundings affects them just as beneficially as would a medical treatment.

Among the numerous letters of appreciation that poured in from the patients of the hospital trains to the offices of the Union, we shall here quote at random two or three that are characteristic. The following was written by an officer:

> It was only in your hospital that we received the most solicitous treatment; the government hospitals could never restore our courage and lead us back to normal conditions as your care has done. Straight from the trenches we came to your cheerful, comfortable train. In addition to the moral comfort and rest, we also benefited by the excellent food. I tender my sincere and heart-felt gratitude to the whole medical staff of the train and I doubt whether this pleasant journey will ever be effaced from my memory. Lieutenant Shershov.

A group of Cossack privates wrote the following letter to the head nurse of a train:

In the first lines of this letter we wish to thank you for your prompt attention to us wounded fighters, seeing how kindly and mercifully you cared for us and tried to please us. If anyone asked you for anything, dear sister, you always let us have it, and so we thank you again and again very much for your prompt attention. When we were put on board the train and found ourselves in your care, we felt as if we were at home and we regard you as our own little mother. Thank you, dear little sister, thank you again, may God send you success for many years to come. Also many thanks to your dear assistant, we thank him many many times, for he is an excellent fellow. And then, dear little sister, we Cossacks thank you again very particularly, because we have never met such people as you. Thank you, thank you.[5]

The Hospital Trains and the Government.

War is a cruel thing. In war-time even the most common human sentiments of pity for its victims are sometimes found fault with from quite unexpected motives and considerations. A wounded soldier is not an ordinary patient, but a soldier, who is expected to return to the ranks. This must be remembered by those who attend him, and they must maintain discipline and prevent the slightest relaxation of it. Such were the constant reminders sent out by the supreme chief of the army hospital service, Prince Oldenburg, in spite of the fact that he himself was a very kindly person at heart. In the Prince's opinion, many of the zemstvo institutions, but especially the hospital trains, failed to meet this requirement. In November, 1915, he told Prince Lvov, President of the Union of Zemstvos, that he intended to appoint army officers as train commanders, to keep the crews and staffs under proper discipline. Prince Lvov objected on the ground that the hospital trains were working on the conditions laid down in the agreement signed by the chief of the general staff on October 12, 1914. This agreement required the Zemstvo Union to equip, maintain, and administer its hospital trains till the end of the War. The appointment of two separate authorities over the trains—the military commander and the surgeon in charge—who would not only be independent of each other, but would also derive their authority from different sources, was bound to result in numerous complications and misunderstandings, from which the work must inevitably suffer. A lengthy correspondence

[5] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, No. 9, pp. 55-56.

followed and, angered by the persistent objections of the Zemstvo Union, Prince Oldenburg finally issued an order to confiscate the zemstvo trains and hand them over to the Red Cross Society. On second thought, however, he rescinded his order. Nevertheless military commanders were gradually appointed to an increasing number of zemstvo trains and conflicts broke out. Petitions began to be received from the zemstvo staffs, asking for permission to resign their posts, and there seemed real danger that the entire organization would collapse. The Central Committee of the Union, having exhausted all possibilities of an amicable settlement, was compelled in November, 1916, to request the Ministry of War to take over the zemstvo trains.[6] Until the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution, however, the trains were not transferred to the Ministry but continued to operate under the direction of the Zemstvo Union.

After the downfall of the Empire in March, 1917, the Provisional Government dispatched several zemstvo trains to Siberia with orders to take up and bring back to Petrograd and Moscow the political prisoners of the old *régime* who were languishing in prisons throughout Siberia.

Field Detachments: Organization and Purpose.

It has already been shown under what conditions the first two field detachments of the Zemstvo Union left Moscow for General Brusilov's army.[7] These detachments were organized in great haste and it was not yet known exactly what work they were to do. Advantage was taken, no doubt, of the experience gained in the Japanese War in 1904, when the zemstvo detachments adapted themselves to the changing conditions, organizing large, permanent hospitals far in the rear, field hospitals and canteens along the routes of the reinforcements and of the convoys of sick and wounded, as well as first-aid stations at the front. In 1914 the field detachments were equipped in a manner which would ensure a maximum of adaptability to rapidly changing conditions.

The staff of the first detachment was composed of two representatives of the Zemstvo Union, three doctors, and thirteen male

[6] *See* report of Central Committee of December 9, 1916, referring to the refusal of the Executive Committee to continue the management of the hospital trains, pp. 1-9.

[7] *See* below, p. 68.

and female trained nurses. It took with it a complete outfit for a hospital of one hundred beds, together with five tents, two motor lorries, one passenger automobile, and fourteen wagons with the required number of horses. The whole equipment cost less than 40,000 rubles.

However, it was found at the outset that this organization suffered from certain defects. The detachment was expected to follow closely the advancing armies, and to be in a position both to unpack and to pack up promptly. Having no permanent base, in view of the constantly shifting front lines, the detachment was compelled to carry with it all its heavy equipment, and for this neither the staff nor the transport facilities of the detachment had been prepared. At the same time, the zemstvo representatives who had succeeded in making their way to the war zone, received from all directions requests that they should assist the army hospital department in looking after the wounded, pending their transfer to hospitals. Large numbers of wounded, after being given a makeshift dressing, were being painfully transported on jolting two-wheeled vehicles, while others failed altogether to reach the regimental ambulances, and were compelled to drag themselves along on foot, often arriving at the hospitals in a terrible condition.

To pick up these casualties in the trenches, often under the fire of the enemy; to send them to the rear in comfortable carriages; to dress their wounds and, in urgent cases, to perform operations at the field hospitals; to change their clothing and to feed and transfer them to the rear hospitals situated twelve or fifteen miles behind the front lines—these were some of the tasks which the zemstvo field detachment was asked to undertake. It is obvious that the equipment of these field detachments had to be of a very special character. During the Japanese War a few Red Cross detachments had been fitted out for this purpose but their equipment and maintenance had proved very expensive; as they were inactive during the long intervals between battles, their usefulness had been considerably impaired.

In spite of these experiences in the past,—experiences that were anything but calculated to encourage repetition,—the Zemstvo Union did not consider itself justified in shirking this urgent problem. It set to work to introduce considerable changes in the organization of all the detachments subsequently formed, especially in that

of the Seventh Zemstvo Detachment, which was intended for operations in East Prussia. The formation of this unit was begun in the latter part of November, 1914, and it was ready to leave Moscow on December 15. One peculiar feature of this detachment was that it could in case of need be split up into several independent units.

The general scheme of work was as follows: At the most advanced point near a railway station the base hospital of the detachment was set up. From this hospital, along roads practical for automobiles, field hospitals were established, and beyond these, as close as possible to the battle line, horse ambulances with stretcher bearers were pushed forward. The ambulances took the wounded to the field hospitals, and here their wounds were dressed, they were fed, given a bath, and had their clothing and underwear cleansed and disinfected. Those wounded who were able to endure further transport were sent by automobile to the base hospital of the detachment. Here they were registered and subjected to indispensable operations, after which the cases which required further evacuation were placed in the zemstvo hospital trains sent to the rear.

The personnel of the detachment consisted of four hundred members, besides twelve surgeons. It was provided with army tents specially made for the Union, bathing facilities, disinfection chambers, thirty-two automobiles, one hundred horses, and a number of wagons. The complete equipment of the Seventh Zemstvo Detachment, the largest of all, cost about 340,000 rubles. By December 10, 1914, the equipment of the detachment was completed. One of the field hospitals of the detachment was set up for examination and trial on the Khodynka Field on the outskirts of Moscow, at that time covered with snow. The Emperor and his family made a careful examination of the hospital, and the Empress presented it with a field chapel. The favorable impression produced by the hospital upon the Imperial Family greatly facilitated the Zemstvo Union's requests for further appropriations by the Government for similar purposes.

Thus a carefully considered plan of organization and operation was rapidly evolved from the haphazard equipment of the first two zemstvo detachments. In war, however, even the most carefully planned schemes very seldom work out in accordance with expectation, and thus it happened that as the Seventh Detachment was about to leave for the front in East Prussia, alarming news reached

the Zemstvo Union from the Caucasian front, where the Turks had launched their offensive on Sarakamysh and the Russians were moving into Turkish Armenia. The Trans-Caucasian Committee of the Zemstvo Union which had been formed in Tiflis had no hospitals at its disposal. The headquarters at Moscow therefore decided to order the Seventh Detachment at once to the Caucasus, and instead of East Prussia, the leaders of the detachment found themselves compelled to work in the wild territory of the Caucasus and on the banks of the Euphrates. Now they had to organize camel convoys to transport equipment over scarcely passable mountain trails and to carry the sick and wounded hundreds of miles, changing from camel stretchers to sleighs, from sleighs to automobiles, and so on. Practically the entire hospital work of the Zemstvo Union in Trans-Caucasia was carried out by this detachment, which opened hundreds of hospitals, dispensaries, and other institutions for the transport and treatment of the wounded and sick.

With the exception of the earlier detachments, all of them were organized along the same lines as the Seventh. They had all been designed for the general care of the wounded during battle; they were all designed for rapid maneuvering and abundantly supplied with transport facilities; they could be divided up into several independent units, which came to be known later on as "flying squads." The only difference between the detachments was in detail of organization and in size, and consequently also in the cost. Thus, the Fourth Detachment cost 77,000 rubles, whereas the Fifth had cost 140,000 and the Sixth 180,000 rubles. Subsequently the average cost of equipping a detachment was fixed at 100,000 rubles, with an estimated monthly expenditure of 20,000 rubles.

Each detachment was attached to a certain military unit, an army corps as a rule, and it was expected to move with it. It was not always, however, possible for the detachments to operate at full strength. The flying squads, which were attached to smaller army units forming part of the corps, would frequently be detached from their bases, as well as from each other, and forced to work under dissimilar conditions. This splitting up of detachments was especially common during the spring and summer retreats of the Russian army in 1915, when many of the flying squads were forced to make endless marches over deep sand through swamps and forests in the dead of night, in unfamiliar localities and often under the enemy's

direct fire. In the course of three months, when the Russian armies changed their position most frequently, nearly every flying squad found itself compelled to cover by road any distance from two hundred to six hundred miles. Sometimes the roads were crowded with retreating troops and refugees, the result being that they could move only very slowly, sometimes not more than a few score yards an hour.[8] But even under these unfavorable conditions the zemstvo workers did not fail to do everything within their power to render useful service. At every halt they tried to set up dressing stations and canteens. Thus, we learn from the report of the first flying squad of the Eighteenth Zemstvo Detachment that in the course of six weeks of uninterrupted movement during June and July, 1915, this one squad succeeded in organizing dressing stations and canteens in not less than fifteen different places in the provinces of Lublin and Grodno.[9]

The detachments received their preparation and training for the care of the wounded, which was, of course, their fundamental purpose, in Moscow. During actual fighting their members would naturally be exposed to the most strenuous trials, for there was intensive work to be done day and night in removing the wounded from the battlefield, dressing their wounds, feeding, and transporting them to the rear. In this connection it should be noted that it was often found impossible to postpone urgent operations, as there might be cases where the life of a soldier depended upon the prompt use of the surgeon's knife. Operations of one kind or another, including even the most complicated and dangerous, were performed at all the zemstvo field detachments. In the reports we find references not only to amputations, but also to trepanning operations and partial openings of the abdominal cavity.

Here is a case reported by the Second Detachment:

> Partial openings of the abdominal cavity were made in the case of two soldiers who were carried in with their intestines protruding. One of the men had his intestines protruding to the extent of about one yard and they were soiled with dirt and straw and covered with filthy, wet linen rags. . . . According to the statement of the victim himself, he had had to crawl in this condition to our trenches immediately after

[8] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, No. 24, pp. 136-140.
[9] *Ibid.*, Nos. 22-23, pp. 91-92.

being wounded near the German trenches, after which he had been picked up and sent to our detachment.

One of these men died two hours after the operation, but the other survived and after a time was fit for evacuation to the interior.[10]

It is not easy to obtain complete reports covering the work of the zemstvo detachments in this particular field. As a rule, no serious attempt was made to obtain anything like complete and satisfactory reports. They very often failed to mention the number of the wounded attended to; this was due to the fact that during the second half of the campaign the war censorship suppressed the publication of such reports. Only thirty reports covering more or less extensive periods, from three to twelve months, contain information concerning the number of wounded soldiers who were given first aid and transported by the detachments. Summing up this information, we find that in the course of a year's work one detachment composed of three flying squads attended from 5,000 to 12,000 cases. This figure, no doubt, is not very large; but it must be remembered that there were months of inactivity in the trenches, as against mere days of actual fighting. There were instances when the small staff of a flying squad had to deal with as many as six hundred casualties a day. On the other hand, there were periods when a field hospital would receive no more than a few score of patients in the course of an entire month. It should be noted, however, that even in the intervals between battles the zemstvo detachments did not remain idle. Indeed, they were able to render the largest amount of service and benefit to the army precisely within these comparatively peaceful periods.

Bathing Stations.

Position fighting, involving long periods of confinement to the trenches, was going on under unhygienic conditions detrimental to the health of the men. Covered with filth and vermin, the soldiers proved an easy prey to infection. Accordingly the zemstvo detachments gave their first attention to the erection of bathing stations for the troops. These bathing stations varied greatly in type as circumstances required. Sometimes they were commodious premises equipped with shower baths and other conveniences: at other times

[10] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 9, p. 31.

the facilities were of the most rudimentary kind. A bathing station of the first type was established in Turkish Armenia at a distance of eighty miles from the Russian frontier, for which purpose the Seventh Detachment adapted a large, warm tent on the banks of the Euphrates. The tent was provided with eight shower baths, hot-water boilers, and a powerful pump. The whole equipment was brought on camel-back over difficult mountain passes. We also find reports of small bathing stations at places where the halt was of short duration. Thus, the Fifth Detachment reports that "the bathing station was set up in one of the peasant cottages, glass panes were replaced in the windows, the oven was rebuilt so as to hold the boiler which had been made out of an iron petrol barrel; buckets, lanterns, and a few other necessary articles were bought; yet the total cost of the whole equipment did not exceed the sum of 21 rubles. From April 1 to 29, 1915, during which time the detachment was stationed here, about 6,000 soldiers enjoyed the benefits of the bathing station."[11]

Attached to these bathing stations there were invariably cleansing and disinfection chambers through which the clothing and underwear of the soldiers were passed while they were taking their bath. Frequently the soldiers had no clean underwear and then it had to be supplied by the unions. Special laundries were organized to deal with the soiled underwear left behind. Clean underwear was sorted out: the badly worn garments were torn into pieces to serve as putties, while others were sent to the repair shops. In this way the supply of clean underwear was constantly renewed and whatever was missing was provided by the warehouses of the Zemstvo Union. It was soon also found necessary to establish barbers' shops in connection with the bathing stations. The Union had also to face the problem of repairing the soldiers' boots, which were often in a bad state, and the result was that the first boot repair shops at the front were also due to the Union's initiative.

Other Activities of the Field Detachments.

Dispensary work had been carried on from the outset on a very large scale, at first for the soldiers alone, later also for the local civilian population and refugees. In view of frequent applications

[11] *Ibid.*, No. 18, p. 33.

for relief from persons suffering from their teeth, it became necessary to employ dentists and open special surgeries for dental treatment. The dispensaries were also helpful in bringing to light not only cases of infectious disease among the population but more particularly abdominal troubles. To save the army from the danger of infection, it was necessary to provide special isolation hospitals and to organize the campaign against epidemics at the front. It is obvious that such measures were far beyond the capacity of individual detachments and, as will be seen farther on, it was left to the higher institutions of the Zemstvo Union to grapple with this problem. Nevertheless the detachments did all they could within their limited facilities, and in the intervals between battles they organized on their own initiative isolation hospitals. In the reports of the various detachments we meet with references to the organization not only of special hospitals for the treatment of cholera, typhoid fever, smallpox, etc., but even for venereal diseases and eczema.

Epidemic diseases of the intestines made it imperative to adopt measures for the purification of drinking water and to provide proper nourishment for those sections of the local population and refugees who stood in the most urgent need of better food than they themselves were able to provide.

The result was that long queues of hungry people began to be seen round the field kitchens of the zemstvo detachments when these were preparing the food for their soldier patients. These were composed mostly of the children of refugees who had taken up their abode in the neighboring forests; but they also included hungry local residents reduced to distress by the devastation of war. The zemstvo detachments thus found themselves compelled to establish large soup kitchens and to work hard in order to obtain the necessary provisions.

As regards the purification of the drinking water, the zemstvo detachments devoted themselves to the cleansing of the wells and pumps, repairing wherever necessary the plumbing, supplying the troops with water boilers, and setting up a regular network of canteens and tea rooms, where sugar and tea, and sometimes also bread, was supplied free of charge. In connection with the bathing stations, tea rooms became almost indispensable, since it was impossible otherwise to restrain the soldiers after their hot steam bath from cooling themselves with any kind of water that happened to be

available at the moment. Lastly, modest little canteens were opened in connection with the bathing stations, for the sale to soldiers at cost price of various articles in most common use.

It would be difficult to enumerate all the activities of these zemstvo detachments. Suffice it to say that they served the needs of the army with genuine devotion; a representative of the army had merely to hint at the existence of this or that particular need, and the Union at once made every effort to satisfy it. Sometimes this would be done even without any request from the army authorities, the detachments themselves taking the initiative. For instance, the detachments took a very active part in the work of inoculation against cholera and typhoid fever. Among other things, they obtained from Moscow large numbers of gas masks and distributed them among the troops. Their care for the hygiene of the army went so far that they undertook to remove and bury the carcasses of dead cattle and horses, and to look after the general sanitary conditions. At the very first request from the military authorities the detachments organized carpenters' shops, machine shops, shops for the repair of harness and even rifles, and there were instances in which the technical experts of the Union set idle sawmills to work again in order to provide timber for the trenches. Another branch of activity was the maintenance of field post offices as near as possible to the trenches for the benefit of the soldiers. The detachments also, whenever requested to do so by the military authorities, undertook the feeding of labor battalions and other workers connected with various army establishments.

The relief of refugees and of civilian population was not confined to the supply of food and medical assistance. Many detachments used to lend their horses to the peasants for agricultural work. They also assisted in the harvesting of the crops which the refugees had been obliged to abandon in their flight. Other detachments, again, collected the children who were left either without parents or without homes and sent them in groups to the various Moscow asylums under the care of specially appointed attendants.

It is impossible to reduce the manifold activities of these detachments to mere figures. Nor is it at all desirable that the work accomplished by the detachments should be regarded solely in its statistical aspect, since that would give us, after all, a very limited conception of its true importance. These undertakings inevitably

were as a rule of short duration for the constant shifting from place to place, in accordance with the movements of the front line, frequently obliged the detachments to pack up and remove their institutions, or, even more frequently, to hand them over complete to the zemstvo organizations of the front.

There was another reason for the comparatively brief duration of the various organizations set up by the field detachments. This was the fact that such establishments usually came into being in the intervals between heavy fighting immediately behind the front lines, whereas the zemstvo workers were always eager to penetrate as close as possible to the trenches, where their services were naturally most needed. The detachments would hand over these establishments to the committees of the front, and would then push forward. The zemstvo detachments always tried to adjust themselves to the vital needs of the army in the field, digging themselves in right behind the trenches, often within the range of the fire of the enemy. Spacious dugouts were prepared in which first-aid stations, kitchens, tea rooms, and depots would be set up. With the outside world communications could be maintained only in the night-time. The Zemstvo Union also produced a special type of trench stove which came into extensive use on the southwestern front; it burnt solid alcohol, thus avoiding smoke, which would have attracted the attention of the enemy. This eagerness of the members of the zemstvo detachment to maintain close contact with the troops in action resulted not merely in practical benefits for the soldiers, but it also contributed, to an extraordinary extent, to the maintenance of a proper morale in the ranks of the army, who were made to feel that they had not been forgotten and were brought into direct contact with volunteers representing the general public in its endeavors to help them.

Needless to say, this everlasting eagerness to go forward into the very thick of the fighting, and the manifest desire to share all the hardships and burdens of the army, could not but involve heavy sacrifices. At one time or another every zemstvo detachment was certain to find itself exposed to the enemy's fire, and the majority of the men and women serving on the staffs of the detachments were decorated with medals of St. George for gallantry. A considerable number of them were killed and wounded in the performance of their duties. The zemstvo detachment operating in the region of the Black Sea was captured in its entirety by the enemy and a similar

fate befell a flying squad of the Third Detachment and the detachment of the zemstvo of Bessarabia.

Distribution of Field Detachments.

The distribution of the field detachments over the various fronts was not even. Two detachments worked in Trans-Caucasia and Persia; seven, on the northern (German) front; nine on the southwestern front; and thirteen on the western front.

In the beginning the detachments operated quite independently of each other, dealing directly with the Central Committee at Moscow. Gradually, however, they were made to follow the instructions of the Union's committees of the front, so that by the autumn of 1915 they were already under their absolute orders. Special detachments of a lighter type were sometimes organized in the war zone to carry the wounded from the trenches and render them first aid. They were usually known as field ambulances and depended for supplies on the army depots. Field ambulances were organized in thirty-four units, as follows: eleven on the northern front, ten in Trans-Caucasia, nine on the western, and four on the southwestern front. The field ambulances carried the wounded soldiers as a rule in light two-wheeled vehicles on springs, drawn by a team of horses. Much work was also done by motor cars adapted for ambulance service, and a certain number of these cars usually formed part of the equipment of every detachment (the Seventh, for instance, had thirty-two such motor ambulances). Special automobile convoys were also organized, each consisting of twenty cars for the transport of the wounded, five light cars for the medical staff and administrative officers, two lorries, one car with repair machinery, and five motorcycles for the use of road scouts. Wherever the roads were good these automobiles were found of the greatest use. An efficient body of drivers composed of students from the technical colleges made it possible to operate the motor ambulances even on poor country roads, which at first sight might have seemed discouraging and almost impassable. In the deep sands and marshes of White Russia, however, and especially during the heavy rains in the spring and autumn, automobiles often proved useless.

In Trans-Caucasia and in the Carpathians it was found necessary to transport the wounded on horses. For the seriously wounded, stretchers would be suspended on two long elastic poles, the ends of

which were attached to the saddles of the two horses, or sometimes, mules or donkeys.

In some places the wounded had to be transported by water. This was the case in Trans-Caucasia, where the Seventh Detachment organized a regular fleet of hospital barges on Lakes Urmia and Van; these barges were towed to their destinations by oil-burning tugs. According to an approximate calculation, more than 1,000,000 wounded soldiers were conveyed by such improvised methods by all the zemstvo detachments.

In one sense the zemstvo field detachments may be regarded as pioneers preparing the way for humanitarian organizations, investigating the urgent needs of the army and thereby winning the confidence of the rank and file, as well as of the commanding officers. The detachments very quickly became the initiators of nearly all the measures which the Union adopted at the front.

From a large mass of greetings, expressions of appreciation, and letters of gratitude received from high army officers, we shall here quote only one, which, whilst not exactly the most enthusiastic, is nevertheless the most interesting for our purpose, because it makes an attempt to explain the motive of the appreciation which it expresses. This letter was received from the officer in command of a division of infantry and was published in the order of the day issued on New Year's Day, 1916; it reads as follows:

To describe more fully the achievements of the Fifth Zemstvo Field Detachment, I shall point out the following features:

(1) The remarkable willingness with which the detachment performed its difficult task, responding to the first summons wherever it was needed, irrespective of distance and condition of roads. (2) The alertness displayed by the detachment; it was sufficient to give it a mere hint, and it at once did everything possible. (3) Its constant endeavor to perform its tasks in the very thick of the fighting, regardless of risks. (4) The extraordinary and touching responsiveness which made it possible for the detachment not only to alleviate the acute distress of the wounded, but also to ease the hardships of the officers and soldiers in the trenches during the actual fighting, by sending forward field-kitchens with tea and food and hot water boilers. (5) The exceptional capacity for quick readjustments, thanks to which the Fifth Zemstvo Detachment, although composed of men who found themselves under fire for the first time in their lives, was able to bear the hardships

and sufferings of war with such marvellous courage and endurance, always following the movements of our division under the most trying conditions.[12]

Combating Epidemic Diseases.

It was the business of the field detachments to keep in touch with the needs of the troops at the front. The nature of their operations, requiring light equipment and a high degree of mobility, made it impossible for them to create a permanent organization to protect the army from one of its worst enemies,—infectious disease. The army moved amidst a population part of which still clung to their homes, whilst others had already abandoned them, and offered a favorable field for the spread of disease. To isolate the army from all contact with the local population was, of course, impossible. If the health of the army was to be safeguarded, it was necessary to watch with great care the state of health of the civilian population and to take far-reaching measures of prevention in due time. With the retreat of the army in 1915 it became necessary to dig several new lines of trenches in the immediate rear. For this purpose thousands of men and women were sent to the front. To some extent they were recruited among the natives of Siberia, who were accustomed to altogether different conditions of life. These vast armies of laborers had to be provided with food and shelter, more or less tolerable sanitary conditions had to be created for them, and they had to receive medical attendance.

The authorities were only too well aware of the terrible danger threatening the army from infectious disease, and they offered no objection to the measures adopted by the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. The various army headquarters staffs were completely incapable of solving these enormously difficult problems and therefore cordially welcomed the coöperation of the unions which submitted simple and practical proposals to the authorities. This sentiment inevitably spread from the army at large to the General Headquarters, and the result was that the fight against epidemics in the war zone was officially entrusted to the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns.

The Union of Zemstvos endeavored to organize medical relief after the pattern of the medical establishment of the zemstvos in

[12] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 32, pp. 124-125.

peace time. It was proposed to divide the entire length of the front into a number of sectors. In the center of each sector an isolation station was to be set up, in charge of a doctor, or at least a junior medical officer. Gradually, hospitals containing wards for infectious cases were to be opened in connection with the isolation stations. Large hospitals for the treatment of infectious diseases, such as cholera, typhoid fever, etc., were opened in the cities, and treatment and medicines were given free of charge. Isolation stations would take charge of suspicious cases, the houses from which they were taken, as well as the clothing of the patients, would be disinfected and, when serious epidemics were discovered, anti-epidemic detachments would be summoned.

The difficulty experienced in carrying out this scheme was that the work had to be done with promptitude in unfamiliar surroundings. Then there were the constant changes of position, for the retreat of the armies inevitably gave rise to new problems from day to day, demanding immediate solution. Thus, the Warsaw Committee began its operations on the left bank of the Vistula. Later it was forced to organize its work all over again between the Vistula and the Niemen, and finally found itself compelled to cross to the right bank of the latter river as the enemy advanced. During the great retreat of the Russian army, again, the medical organization of the northwestern front found itself pushed back all the way to Smolensk, and it was only slowly and gradually that it found it possible later on to advance once more into the province of Minsk. This constant danger of further retreats made it necessary for the Union to make careful preparations for prompt action in the immediate rear. However, even in the provinces which were nearest to the war zone matters were far from satisfactory. Thus, for instance, out of a total of seventy medical sectors in the province of Smolensk, less than one-half were in working order, for there was a shortage of doctors, in consequence of their mobilization, for service with the army. The Zemstvo Union found it necessary to fight infectious diseases not only at the front, but also in the interior.

The number of medical institutions established by the Union in localities where the heaviest concentration of troops was taking place was constantly increasing, so that as early as November, 1915, after the retreat was over, the committee of the northwestern front controlled 117 dispensaries and 48 hospitals for infectious

cases, with a total capacity of 3,275 beds. In spite of all the difficulties which beset these institutions, they were able during the first nine months of their operation to take care of about 130,000 cases of infectious diseases registered at the isolation stations, whilst hospital cases, principally cholera and typhoid, accounted for 10,176 registrations. Practically the same development was noted by the medical institutions of the committee of the southwestern front. During the first few months following the great offensive of General Brusilov in Galicia, the Zemstvo Union was given charge of all local hospitals abandoned by the Austrians. These numbered 39 with 3,100 beds and splendid equipment. As part of the hospital staffs had remained on duty after the withdrawal of the Austrians, it was necessary merely to complete them, to provide the hospitals with medical supplies and funds, and reopen them for the benefit of the local population. The Zemstvo Union decided to reopen 30 of these hospitals with a total capacity of 2,500 beds, of which 250 were set aside for infectious cases. This seemed the more urgent since cholera and typhus were spreading rapidly in Galicia even among the troops. After the retreat of the Russians from Galicia most of these hospitals were naturally lost again, and the committee of the southwestern front was compelled to organize medical relief exclusively with its own means. The committee also found it necessary to extend its work from the war zone to several provinces in the immediate rear, notably those of Podolia and Kiev.

The medical organizations of the Union's committees of the front concentrated under their control not only the work of protecting the health of the army against infection from without, but they also served the needs of the army itself. The medical undertakings described in the present account of the work of the field detachments were expanded and improved by the medical bureaus which were appointed by the Union's committees of the front in January, 1915.[13] Assisted by a whole network of institutions of their own, the bureaus took care of all cases of infectious diseases whether among the civilian population or in the army and sent them to isolation hospitals. The majority of field detachments were supplied by the medical bureaus with special means of transport, so as to keep infectious cases in strict isolation en route from the front to the rear.

[13] They were modeled on the medical bureaus of the provincial zemstvos and were concerned with measures for the prevention of epidemics.

Another field in which the medical bureaus rendered valuable assistance to the field detachments was that of surgical aid. Not only did they provide these detachments with personnel, medicines, dressing material, surgical instruments, but they also created special squads of a lighter type which helped in giving first-aid to the wounded, during periods of intense fighting, returning afterward to their normal functions of preventing the spreading of epidemics.

Among the chief service rendered by the Zemstvo Union to the Russian army during the War must be included the extensive campaign of inoculation against cholera, typhoid fever, and smallpox.

The urgent necessity of such inoculation was realized for the first time in the course of a conference held by the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns toward the end of April, 1915. At the beginning of June of the same year the Zemstvo Union opened at Moscow a dispensary where patients were inoculated free of charge against typhoid fever and cholera.[14] At the end of June a large detachment was organized and dispatched to the Caucasus, its main object being to inoculate against smallpox, typhoid fever, and cholera, and to distribute quinine as a precaution against malaria.[15] On the Austro-German front the question of a general, compulsory inoculation remained in suspense for a considerable time before a decision was arrived at. Wherever the representatives of the Zemstvo Union succeeded in convincing the military authorities of the advantage of this measure, they were given permission to inoculate the troops. Thus, in one of the armies on the southwestern front, trial inoculations made during June, 1915, showed very satisfactory results, so that during the following month the Union was given permission to inoculate about 13,000 more men.[16] In August, 1915, the Union's committee of the southwestern front, anxious to improve the work of inoculation, convoked a conference of bacteriologists. The conference was also attended by representatives of the medical institutions at the front. Plans were drawn up for the proper organization of inoculation, and provision was made for a uniform system of serum production and distribution. After this conference serums were produced on a large scale, so that no further shortage was felt. During the second half of 1915 the committee of the south-

[14] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 24, pp. 67-70.
[15] *Ibid.*, No. 29, pp. 75-90.
[16] *Ibid.*, Nos. 22-23, p. 72.

western front alone effected 912,298 inoculations against cholera and typhoid and 50,410 against smallpox.[17]

On the western front the Zemstvo Union succeeded in organizing the campaign for the prevention of epidemics a little later. On October 11, 1915, the Union convoked at Smolensk a conference of bacteriologists and army doctors, which was presided over by the chief of the medical service of the western front. It was decided that inoculations against typhoid fever should at once be begun on a large scale, and that inoculations against cholera would also be necessary. Official inoculation commissions were then created with the participational zemstvo doctors. The Zemstvo Union undertook to supply serums for the needs of the entire western front as well as necessary instruments and also to undertake a part of the work of inoculation. In Smolensk and Minsk the Union opened special laboratories for the testing of serums received from Moscow, and organized thirty inoculation squads which during the first ten weeks, that is, up to December 22, 1915, carried out 468,304 inoculations.[18]

By November 1, 1916, the total number of zemstvo inoculation squads on all the fronts was already eighty-four.[19]

By the summer of 1916 most of the men in the field had been inoculated against typhoid, and in some of the armies against both typhoid and cholera. In the course of the summer of 1916 special inoculations against cholera were performed in many instances, and by November 1 of the same year the total number of all inoculations had reached about 5,000,000. The conference of representatives of the army medical service and of the Union of Zemstvos which met on August 28, 1916, came to the unanimous conclusion that the prompt inoculations had tended considerably to reduce sickness and mortality in the army. At the same time the conference found it desirable to repeat the anti-typhoid inoculations of the troops twice a year.

From what has been stated above it will be seen that the enterprise of the Zemstvo Union yielded beneficial results, and that the plan and the methods adopted in the selection of vaccines and in the

[17] *Ibid.*, Nos. 35-36, p. 243.

[18] *Ibid.*, Nos. 30-31, pp. 188-191.

[19] Six on the northern front, forty-four on the western, thirty on the southwestern, and four in the Caucasus.

insistence upon repeated and simultaneous inoculations amply justified themselves. This was readily admitted not only by the medical authorities of the Allied armies, but also by the Paris Academy of Medicine (May 9, 1916). Successful work at the front was made possible by the sympathetic attitude of the higher army authorities, as well as by the loyal coöperation between the army medical service and the unofficial bodies under the direction of the Zemstvo Union.

In the interior of Russia, however, inoculation made very slow progress, owing to the lack of coördination in the work of the competent authorities and institutions. In consequence large numbers of newly mobilized men who had undergone long periods of training in the interior were sent to reinforce the army at the front without having been inoculated.[20]

New Field Hospitals.

At the beginning of 1916 the number of cases of typhoid fever and cholera had been considerably reduced. The majority of refugees had been moved far into the interior, and the Union's committees of the front were now in a position to transfer to the local zemstvos a large number of medical institutions originally created within the war zone for the purpose of combating epidemics. This measure had become the more urgent since the institutions of the Union on the western and northern fronts were now confronted with new tasks. At the close of January, 1916, the Ministry of War requested the Union's committees of these two fronts to prepare at once field hospitals with a total capacity of nearly 40,000 beds. It became necessary within two or three weeks, to erect the huts and provide the beds required on sites assigned by the military authorities, besides finding adequate staffs. It was intended that some of these huts should be retained for future use at the more important railway junctions, whilst the remainder were to be of a merely temporary character. An enemy offensive was expected, with the inevitable large number of casualties, yet there was in the immediate rear of the war zone no adequate number of hospitals for the anticipated stream of sick and wounded soldiers.

[20] *Kratki Obzor Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*) of the Work of the Union of Zemstvos, Moscow, 1917, pp. 30-31; *also* Tarasevich in *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 32, pp. 67-72; *also* Martsinovsky, in *ibid.*, No. 29, pp. 75-90.

The task was truly gigantic and the engineering and medical staffs of the zemstvos had to strain all their energies in order to deal effectively with the situation. The army authorities, for their part, became nervous and clamored for daily reports of what was being done. Meanwhile the railways found it impossible to give prompt delivery of the building materials, medical supplies, and equipment. Again, some of the sites assigned for the hospitals proved swampy, whilst others had no drinking water. To make matters still worse, the enemy's air raids repeatedly destroyed whatever was being built. In spite of these difficulties, a number of huts were available by the beginning of March. The haphazard organization of the undertaking could not but leave its mark upon the work, which proved unsatisfactory in many respects; but at any rate food, shelter, and medical treatment had been provided for the wounded soldiers in places where but for these hastily created hutments, they would have been doomed to hunger and cold. The many serious difficulties which continually obstructed the execution of the plan made it necessary, it is true, for the army authorities gradually to reduce its scope, so that only 12,000 beds on the western front and 15,600 on the northern front were provided.

Dental Hospitals.

One of the services that the medical officers at the front took over and learned from the practice of the field detachments was the organization of dental treatment. The first zemstvo dental clinic was opened as early as January 22, 1915, in connection with the dispensary of the northwestern front. The very large number of officers and men who traveled long distances to be treated suggested that it might be useful to bring the dental clinics within easy reach from the trenches. On February 1 the first dental hospital at the front began work, to be followed by five more. Each hospital consisted of a staff of four dentists, and had its own transport facilities consisting of two or three teams of horses for conveying the equipment. The patients were received in the field hospitals of the Zemstvo Union or in the regimental hospitals, just behind the line of the trenches. Dental treatment was given twice a week, an arrangement which permitted the same surgeon to take care of a relatively large area. From the larger dental hospitals special flying squads were

dispatched for periods of one to two weeks, during which they visited remote places along the front, too far for patients to leave for treatment. During these visits one surgeon frequently had to treat about eighty cases a day, but the average number of cases fluctuated between thirty and thirty-five a day. In addition to the six dental hospitals mentioned above, several dental surgeons were employed at zemstvo dispensaries, attending chiefly to the needs of the local population. After the summer retreat of 1915 all the dental organizations of the zemstvo likewise had to withdraw far to the rear. No sooner, however, had the troops entrenched themselves in their new positions than they began to send requests to the Zemstvo Union for the return of the dentists who had been withdrawn from the front. By this time each army corps was already clamoring for a special dental clinic, and under the auspices of the Union's committee of the front a dentistry division was now organized, which set about forming additional dental hospitals so that on the western front eighteen dental field hospitals and nine clinics in the immediate rear were already at work by March, 1916. The total number of cases treated on the western front up to February, 1916, was 30,792, whilst the number of dentists had risen to 91 by March 1 of the same year. By November 1, it was found that 200 dentists and 140 hospitals were being maintained by the Zemstvo Union on all the fronts. Dental treatment was administered to about 10 per cent of the men.

From the preceding pages it will doubtless be clear that the medical organizations of the Union's committees at the front, having started with the protection of the army against infection by civilians and refugees, gradually succeeded in bringing under their own direction all medical activities undertaken by the Zemstvo Union on the various fronts. Compelled at one time to carry the fight against infectious diseases into the provinces situated near the war zone, these organizations opened a vast number of medical institutions, both of a special and auxiliary character, which increased steadily until the beginning of 1916. By this time new and important tasks within the army itself were demanding attention, so that the medical organizations of the front were anxious to hand over to the local zemstvos the institutions which were already functioning smoothly in the rear, while continuing to defray their current expenses out of army funds.

Bathing Stations and Laundries.

No other establishment maintained by the Zemstvo Union at the front enjoyed such popularity as did the bathhouses. As we have seen already, attempts had been made by the field detachments to open bathhouses for the soldiers. Needless to say, the committees of the front were only too well aware of the importance of proper bathing facilities for the troops from the hygienic standpoint; but it was very soon discovered that a bath was likewise one of the best means of maintaining the morale of the men. To witness but once the pleasure shown by those who had been given an opportunity of a bath after the appalling filth of the trenches, was sufficient to convince one of the importance of properly organized bathhouses in the life of the army. In spite of their primitive equipment, the bathhouses at the front rang all day long with banter and merriment of the splashing soldiers. There were instances when entire companies, having had their bath and received clean underwear insisted upon giving a rousing cheer in honor of the Zemstvo Union before marching off again. The commanding officers likewise fully appreciated the benefits derived by their men from the bathing stations.[21]

The history of the organization of the first bathing station at the front was as follows. One of the first measures undertaken by the Warsaw committee of the Zemstvo Union, which was established in December, 1914, was to study the conditions which would permit the opening of bathing stations on a vast scale. One of the zemstvo commissioners was accordingly instructed to visit the front, to make a careful study of local conditions, discuss the subject with military authorities, and to report to the committee. The Central Committee approved the report submitted by the commissioner, and in March, 1915, the first detachment for the organization of bathing stations was equipped in Moscow and set at work on the western front.

This detachment was expected to erect ten bathhouses and laundries. The intention was to use such buildings as were already available on the spot, chiefly peasants' cottages, in order to save expenses. The idea was to make the bathhouses easy to move, for which purpose a transport including sixty-five horses was attached to the detachment. The equipment of both bathhouses and laundries was very simple. In the case of the former, it was limited to a large water

[21] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, Nos. 12-13, p. 75.

boiler on wheels, a disinfection chamber, a portable stove, a pump, a water barrel, a tarpaulin for cold water, besides several light pieces of equipment and accessories. The total cost of a bathhouse was 1,900 rubles, whilst that of a laundry 1,400 rubles. The cost of equipment for the entire detachment comprising ten bathhouses and four laundries, and including the transport facilities, amounted to 48,000 rubles. The monthly cost of maintenance, including the cost of soap, wood shavings, and birch brooms, was calculated at 25,000 rubles. The staff was estimated at twenty-five permanent and forty temporary attendants. A bathhouse installed in a peasant cottage was expected to provide as many as five hundred baths a day.[22]

Subsequent detachments were formed along the same lines. By July, 1916, the total number of bathhouses on the western front was 157, of which 130 were independent units and 27 connected with other institutions, such as hospitals, canteens, etc. On January 1, 1917, a census of bathhouses revealed a total of 171, the majority of them being located with the army at the front, only eight bathhouses being in the immediate rear. Cities and towns had only five zemstvo bathhouses; railway stations, fourteen; all the others had been put up in villages, and five were erected in the midst of forests.

The usual type of a zemstvo bathing station was a peasant two-room cottage. With a few simple changes four rooms were obtained; (1) the room for undressing, where the men left their soiled underwear and clothing; (2) the bathroom proper; (3) the steam room; (4) the dressing room, where the men found fresh underwear and their disinfected clothing. Of the men who used the bathhouses 28 per cent received clean underwear from the Union of Zemstvos. Soiled linen would be sent to the laundry and thence to the repair shop, after which it would again be put to use. The laundries were so located that usually one laundry attended to the needs of ten bathhouses. Fifty-two per cent of all the bathhouses had tea rooms connected with them. The soldiers were supplied with soap, etc. In the course of 1916 the number of soldiers who used the bathing stations of the Union of Zemstvos on the western front was 8,533,505, of whom 88.7 per cent were non-commissioned officers and men; 2.1 per cent, officers; 2.8 per cent, trench laborers; 5 per cent, refugees and other civilians; and 1.4 per cent, prisoners of war. The cost per

[22] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, No. 9, pp. 8-15.

each visitor was only 20½ copecks, and this included the cost of administration, amortization of property, and transport.[23]

On the northern front, which after 1915 was made independent of the western front, bathing facilities for the troops were provided on practically the same basis. Toward the close of 1916, fifty-seven bathhouses and fifteen laundries were in operation on this front. The number of men who used them in the course of a period of twelve months was almost 2,500,000.[24]

On the western front the Zemstvo Union began the organization of bathing facilities by opening several large laundries and bathhouses at important points of military concentration, such as Brody, Lvov, and Brest-Litovsk; as early as February, 1915, it was found necessary to supply each army corps with a detachment capable of providing fourteen bathhouses. The estimate allowed for the construction, as a beginning, of sixty bathing stations which would require an initial expenditure of 60,000 rubles and a monthly cost of maintenance of 30,000 rubles. These plans, however, were not carried out immediately, for a considerable number of bathhouses belonging to the Unions of Towns and to the Red Cross Society were available on the southwestern front. Unwilling to create needless competition, the Zemstvo Union came to an understanding with the Union of Towns by which the former was to deal with requirements behind the lines, whilst the Union of Towns was to attend to the needs of the troops at the front. By July, 1916, there were already twenty zemstvo detachments functioning outside the military zone. The staffs received a preliminary training in a training camp in Kiev before joining their units.

The necessary equipment and articles of underwear were supplied to the detachments after their arrival at their destination by the nearest depot of the Zemstvo Union. The detachments operating outside the military zone opened from one to nine bathhouses each. They were not attached to a definite army unit; most of them remained in one place and they had little opportunity to show initiative. On the other hand, the Union of Towns did not succeed in meeting fully the requirements of the army and the Union of Zemstvos received numerous applications for the establishment of bathing stations. This is why, in spite of its agreement with the Union

[23] *Ibid.*, Nos. 64-66, pp. 8-15.

[24] *Ibid.*, No. 49, p. 144.

of Towns regarding the division of sphere of action, the Zemstvo Union actually found itself compelled to organize bathing stations at the front; though up to January 1, 1916, only one detachment, which opened three bathhouses, was in operation. After that date eight additional detachments were formed. By June, 1916, twenty-two detachments were already in operation on the southwestern front. During June, 1916, a month for which we have complete data, 112 bathhouses, 29 laundries, and 15 tea rooms were operating on this front. In the course of the same month 481,796 men used the bathing stations, 379,796 pieces of underwear were issued, 392,740 pieces of underwear went through the laundries, and 30,318 pieces were repaired. During the same period the canteen attached to the bathing station was used by 118,882 men. In the second half of 1916 the capacity of the bathing stations at this front was estimated at 6,000,000 men a year.

At the beginning of 1917, 25 bathhouses and 28 laundries were in operation on the Caucasian front. The number of zemstvo bathhouses on all fronts during the second half of 1916 was 372. When working at full capacity, they were able to deal in one day with about 200,000 men; the actual average daily number of visitors, however, was slightly over 100,000. It would appear, therefore, that the need of the army for bathing facilities was fully met.

Canteens.

The creation of the zemstvo canteens has a direct relation to the relief work conducted for the benefit of the sick and wounded. They were originally designed to provide food for the wounded and sick men, but soon extended their activities to all soldiers. At the beginning the work of the zemstvo canteens met with little approval from the military authorities. In their opinion official army canteens, which provided food for officers and men traveling on official duty, met all the requirements of the army. The zemstvo canteens, on the other hand, by feeding all who applied to them, were thought by the higher army authorities to be encouraging desertions and vagabondage.

After a short time, however, the military command was compelled to have recourse to the services of the zemstvo canteens for the refugees and the local population in the war zone were begging for

help in all directions. Possessing neither the equipment nor the money to undertake the feeding of these hungry masses, the commanding officers requested the Zemstvo Union to extend the work of its canteens to include the civilian population.

The systematic development of canteens began on the southwestern front toward the close of May, 1915, and their number by January 1, 1916, had reached 516. Later, after the refugee movement had abated, the number of zemstvo canteens on this front began to decrease, and by February, 1917, was reduced to 238. On the western front the largest number of canteens, 341, was reached in February, 1916, but it was reduced to 153 in 1917. On the northern front and in the Caucasus the canteen work was never much developed. On the northern front the number of canteens did not exceed thirty and of these only three survived in 1917; in the Caucasus the number of canteens fluctuated between fifteen and twenty-three, feeding almost exclusively the Armenian refugees from Turkey. The character of the work, the conditions under which it had to be carried on, and the clientele served by the canteens varied with time and place. The picture given below, therefore, should be treated as a very general outline.

As a rule, a canteen providing for the refugees and local population took care of about ten villages situated within a radius of ten miles. Canteens for the use of trench laborers were so distributed that they would be within one hour and fifteen minutes walking distance from the quarters of the units assigned to them. The principal difficulty consisted in the scarcity of suitable premises. For the employees it was still possible to find warm quarters in peasant cottages or, at worst, they could be supplied with warm tents or army huts. Much more difficult was the problem of finding heated dining halls. In the summer time the problem was much simplified by serving the meals in the open. During the winter, however, heated dining halls became an absolute necessity. But even where such premises were available they could hold usually only 70 to 100 persons at a time, while those waiting for admission numbered from 500 to 1,500 for each meal. In order to save time, many of the unfortunate people who were using the canteens preferred to take their meals home. Occasionally instead of ready meals they were given foodstuffs which would last for as long as a week. This expedient was particularly appreciated by those whose homes were situated at

some distance from the canteens. To make things easier for the trench workers, field kitchens were sent out twice daily to their camps, or, sometimes, they were given foodstuffs and cooked their meals themselves. In spite of these expedients the congestion at the dining halls continued and not unfrequently meals had to be eaten in the open air even in the bitter cold of the winter. The average cost per day of feeding a refugee was 14 to 22 copecks and of a trench worker 27 to 35 copecks.

The organization of the supply of provisions was by no means an easy matter. Bread was obtained chiefly from the bakeries attached to the canteens and partly from the Army Supply Department. Sometimes flour was handed over to peasants, who would bake the bread for a small remuneration. Flour was received mainly from the stores of the Zemstvo Union, which bought it in central Russia or obtained it from the Army Supply Department. Meat was supplied almost entirely by the Army Supply Department. As regards firewood, it would often be taken without payment from the neighboring forests, or was supplied by the military authorities. The prompt delivery of supplies in a ruined country congested with masses of troops and refugees naturally presented enormous difficulties, and caused much anxiety to the officers in charge of the canteens. Notwithstanding every effort made by the zemstvo depots at the front, the canteens very often found themselves in a critical position for lack of the most indispensable supplies.

The canteens gradually became the centers of a far-reaching organization which included bakeries, slaughterhouses, stables, blacksmiths' shops, bootmaking and carpenters' shops, bathhouses, laundries, hostels, homes for refugees' children, and many others.

On the average each canteen had four members of the higher personnel, 53.2 per cent being men and 46.8 per cent women. Most of the higher personnel were recruited from among the university students, but they also included village teachers and priests. The lower personnel of a canteen averaged eighteen persons.[25] They were enlisted either from among the refugees or from among the trench workers, or, lastly, from among the convalescent soldiers. More than one-third were engaged in looking after the horses and attending to the transport of provisions, water, fodder, firewood, etc.; the others were employed in the kitchen and as waiters in the dining halls.

[25] The minimum number was six; the maximum, fifty-three.

No complete data are available of the number of people served by the zemstvo canteens. On the southwestern front the relief of the refugees and the feeding of the trench laborers was carried on by special organizations and we have stated in a previous chapter that more than 10,000,000 meals were served between June and December, 1915, to refugees. Regarding canteens attached to the labor battalions we have at our disposal more detailed, though by no means complete, figures; from these it appears that the following number of meals were served between May 17, 1915, and August 1, 1916: trench workers obtained 32,754,985 meals; soldiers, 3,907,578 meals; prisoners of war, 4,428,925 meals; and refugees, 355,582 meals.[26]

It should be noted here that soldiers and refugees were only occasional visitors to these canteens.

On the western front the work of all the canteens, that is, those serving the needs of refugees, soldiers, and trench and road laborers, from October, 1915, to June, 1916, is represented by the following figures: 18,629,000 meals to trench and road laborers including 3,919,000 to prisoners of war, 22,083,000 to refugees, 1,475,000 to the civilian population, and 1,831,000 to soldiers. The total number of meals served during this period was 44,590,000.[27]

It seems worth while to give a little space to the work accomplished by the canteens and asylums for the children of refugees. This form of relief was particularly developed on the western front, thanks to the efforts of Countess Alexandra Tolstoi, daughter of the great writer, who took a most active part in a large number of measures of relief undertaken by the Zemstvo Union in the Caucasus and in Minsk. At the close of 1915, Countess Tolstoi was asked to visit the western front to investigate the condition of the zemstvo asylums for refugee children who had lost their parents. These asylums were of a temporary character; they were used as clearing stations where children were washed, dressed, and sent on to the interior in large groups, to institutions where education and training would be provided for them. Countess Tolstoi presented a favorable report on the condition of the asylums. She took advantage of this journey to investigate the condition of children who were still in the care of their parents, and her report contains the following observations:

[26] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 48, p. 126.

[27] *Ibid.*, No. 47, pp. 100-101.

In the course of my visit I was particularly struck by the conditions under which refugee children were living with their parents. Enormous hutments hastily hammered together, only partially lit, very cold, with large chinks and cracks through which the wind was blowing freely, with beds arranged sometimes in two or three tiers—such were the dwellings which were intended to accommodate several hundred refugees. In the towns, as well as in the villages, five and even ten families of refugees are sometimes housed in one apartment or cottage.[28]

The children of refugees lived in exceedingly unsanitary conditions, in idleness, surrounded by people of coarse manners, who spent their time gambling. Countess Tolstoi recommended that a number of premises combining schools and dining halls should be open, where the children of the refugees would be able to spend their time in more favorable surroundings and under the direct supervision of teachers. This recommendation was promptly adopted, and between February, 1916, and August of the same year, Countess Tolstoi was given an opportunity of opening at various points along the front, sixteen such institutions accommodating about 3,000 children. At other points of the front, dining halls were opened, though not quite so rapidly as Countess Tolstoi wished, for the absence of suitable buildings presented considerable difficulty. These schools, where children were also provided with meals, admitted children between four and fourteen years of age. The children were subdivided into four groups. The attendance varied between one hundred and five hundred. The staffs of the schools consisted of the principal and four women teachers, usually drawn from the students of the teachers' colleges. They attended also to the requirements of hygiene and the feeding of the children. In order to avoid the problem of a curriculum—always a serious matter in Russian schools—it was decided that the children should pass through the same course of studies as in the village schools, which was approved by the Government. Dinner consisted of meat and soup, and of grits and porridge; for supper there was porridge with milk or bacon. The older children received professional training. The monthly expenditure per child did not exceed 13.25 rubles. This included the cost of education, food, salaries, and school books.[29]

[28] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 37-38, pp. 215-218.

[29] *Ibid.*, Nos. 37-38, pp. 215-218; Nos. 41-42, pp. 163-168; and Nos. 52-53, pp. 193-203.

According to data furnished up to April, 1917, eighty-one such institutions were in existence at that time on the western front alone.[80]

Zemstvo Retail Stores.

At the beginning of the summer of 1915 the Warsaw committee of the Zemstvo Union suggested that retail stores should be opened at the front to supply the soldiers with all that they required. Prices charged in the area adjoining the front were exorbitant and often the most important articles were lacking.

The field detachments, acting on their own initiative, succeeded in opening small retail stores in connection with bathhouses, and canteens. These first experiments showed, on the one hand, the vastness of the demand and the importance of satisfying it; on the other hand it also revealed the fact that it would be impossible to develop the network of retail stores unless the whole organization was put on a sound foundation, with a regular purchasing machinery and sufficient funds behind it. The Zemstvo Union, however, conducted further experiments; thus, in the area between the Vistula and the Niemen fifteen retail stores were gradually opened, at some of which provisions were sold to the local population, whilst others supplied the wants of the troops. The retail stores of the latter kind were at first opened at distances of five to seven miles behind the front lines, but later on they were moved closer up.

The first retail stores were immensely popular and successful, but were able to work only with interruptions. The Warsaw depots of the Zemstvo Union were not in a position to satisfy the demands of the retail stores scattered over vast distances, whilst the organizers themselves lacked sufficient funds to make independent purchases in the neighboring markets. Sometimes the stores would have to close down entirely. In the late autumn of 1915 the Union's committee of the western front decided to reorganize the business on a more solid basis. The military authorities, whose opinion was asked, showed themselves very favorably disposed toward the new scheme and 1,000,000 rubles were appropriated for this purpose from army funds. It was decided to open two hundred retail stores and to enlist the services of the employees of the Moscow consumers' coöperative societies.

[80] *Ibid.*, Nos. 58-60, p. 100.

A period of feverish activity now began. All the buying was to be done by the Moscow Central Coöperative Society, which had branches all over Russia. The Union's committee of the western front organized a retail stores department and a central warehouse. Each army corps had a special administration in charge of the retail stores. The latter had at its disposal a number of instructors and inspectors who made the rounds of the stores and collected the cash receipts. In Moscow an agency was established to hasten the buying and dispatch of the merchandise. A simple, effective system of accounting was organized, involving separate store and cash accounts for each store. The Zemstvo Union did not intend to derive a profit from the retail stores, but the expenditure on administration and transport, especially horse transport, was so heavy that it was necessary to add 25 per cent to the cost price of articles sold to avoid losses. Prices were uniform and price lists were posted on the walls. The selection of articles offered for sale was made in accordance with the experience gained in Poland and was specially adapted to the needs of the troops at the front. At first, fifty-five different articles were provided, but this number was gradually reduced to forty-five. In spite of the additional 25 per cent charge, the canteen prices still defied all competition on the part of private merchants, for the prices demanded by the latter were two and even three times as high. The success of this undertaking was definitely assured and, aided by the active interest taken in it by the representatives of the coöperative societies of Moscow, the organization began to develop rapidly, especially after February, 1916, when the business began at last to run smoothly and efficiently. At the beginning of September, 1916, 100 stores, 19 depots, and 14 bakeries were already in operation on the western front. There was also a cigarette factory at Minsk employing 525 men and women, as well as a number of other undertakings.

The working capital of the retail stores on the western front was ultimately increased to 3,000,000 rubles. The steady growth of the work is made clear by the following figures.

Retail Stores of the Western Front.

Month	*Value of goods (in rubles)*	*Receipts*
1915 December	44,000	17,000
1916 January	240,000	15,000
February	345,000	224,000
March	721,000	347,000
April	861,000	461,000
May	714,000	739,000
June	918,000	666,000
July	1,249,000	646,000
August	1,446,000	894,000

The business of the retail stores continued until the end of 1916 and by December, 1916, the monthly turnover of the stores of the western front reached 3,000,000 rubles. The general disorganization of transport and supply, however, which was experienced by the end of 1916 affected unfavorably the zemstvo retail stores in the army and in January, 1917, the monthly turnover of the stores of the western front dwindled to 1,200,000 rubles. After the Revolution of February-March, 1917, their position did not improve.

The last reports available are those of July, 1917. They show that during the first half of that year merchandise to the value of 9,887,601 rubles was supplied to the retail stores on the three fronts (western, southwestern, and northern).[31] The number of stores was then considerably more than two hundred.

The story of the retail stores on the northern and southwestern fronts is of no particular interest. On the northern front they numbered 51 in November, 1916, as against 117 on the western front. On the southwestern front the number of zemstvo retail stores on November 1, 1916, was only 48.

Depots and Transport of Goods.

The consolidation of the zemstvo organizations at the front usually began with the activities of the depots. In December, 1914, a vast depot was opened in Warsaw and this was soon followed by

[31] Attempts to organize retail stores on the Caucasian front were not successful, because of the vast distances over which the troops were distributed, and because of the enormous difficulty of securing delivery of goods over mountain tracks.

similar depots in Lvov, Tiflis, and Pskov. After the retreat of the Russian army, the Warsaw depot was transferred to Minsk and that at Lvov to Kiev. At first these wholesale depots merely distributed equipment and supplies to the zemstvo detachments formed in Moscow. As no accurate information regarding the requirements of these detachments could be obtained, the work of supply was carried on in accordance with the original plan, that is to say, they received underwear, clothing, hospital equipment, medical goods, surgical instruments, dressing material, and canned food. In February, 1915, the Warsaw depots had in stock about 200 carloads of goods, valued at 1,000,000 rubles.

When the organization of the Union of Zemstvos for the work in the army was first created, that is, when its agencies were attached to military units, the depots were transferred to the places where these agencies had their headquarters, and they continually moved with the headquarters of the respective armies. In course of time it was found necessary to go even farther. New depots were opened from time to time, and by the end of 1916 they numbered about three hundred.[32] In addition to these general depots, special depots of medical supplies were created.

The successful operation of the depots depended on three conditions: (1) proximity to the institutions which they were intended to supply; (2) mobility; and (3) adequacy of stock. Under the conditions of the war of maneuver which prevailed during the first half of the hostilities, proximity to the respective institutions would have exposed the warehouses to the constant danger of enemy attacks and they would always have had to be prepared to beat a hasty retreat. This is why the zemstvo depots in the early days generally tried to establish themselves near railway stations. They would organize mobile branches in freight cars which could always be attached to departing trains at the last moment. It was not always possible, however, to use the railways in this way, for the troops, and with them also the institutions of the Zemstvo Union, were often too far away from the railway lines, not to mention the fact that the efficiency of the railways was gradually deteriorating. It was necessary under these circumstances to provide independent transport facilities for the needs of the depots, enabling them to remove their goods as well

[32] On November 1, 1916, the number of depots on the western front was 116; on the southwestern, 75; on the northern, 23; and on the Caucasian, 58.

as the buildings themselves without having to depend upon the regular service of the railways. Many depots had as much as 85 per cent of their supplies delivered by horse or motor car.

The depots soon set up an independent machinery for purchases. The various institutions at the front having no experience at the outset, did not even attempt to plan their work in advance. Their demands on the depots showed as complete a lack of foresight and system as the military operations themselves. It was impossible to wait until Moscow should be able to execute urgent orders, so that the depots at the front were compelled to buy up hastily supplies of the commodities of which they had no stock. The depots nearest to the trenches found themselves frequently in the same situation, as regards their dealings with the other depots, on which they depended as their base at the front. Lastly, whenever the institutions of the Union were unable to obtain promptly from the nearest depots the articles they required, they endeavored to make independent purchases. The uncoördinated activities of the purchasing agents of the numerous institutions of the Union, even though tending to increase prices, enabled them to make better use of the local markets.

Very soon, however, and especially after the great retreat of the Russian armies in the summer of 1915, local markets were exhausted. This buying on their own account, coupled with much self-confidence and the maintenance of independent connections between the officers of the Zemstvo Union and different regions of Russia, led the zemstvos to send a number of special purchasing agents to the interior of the country. In consequence there was chaos in the organization of supply, and a most deplorable competition in the interior.

The Central Committee of the Union, anxious though it was to respect the independence of its local organs, found it necessary to intervene at this juncture. It insisted upon the submission of detailed and specified estimates by the institutions at the front; as the latter had by this time acquired a considerable amount of experience, it was possible at the beginning of 1916 to establish a budgetary system in place of the chaotic management that had hitherto prevailed. A number of conferences were held in Moscow, in which representatives from the front participated and where the requirements of the institutions at the front were definitely ascertained. We

have to note in this connection that the requirements had become so large by the middle of 1916 that the monthly budget for food and fodder supplies alone reached the sum of 5,000,000 rubles.

In recasting its central administration to meet the requirements of a vast supply organization, the Central Committee made every effort to afford the representatives from the front an opportunity of taking part in the work of the central supply department in Moscow, as well as in the purchasing commissions set up at Astrakhan, Rostov-on-Don, Odessa, Petrograd, and Vladivostok. In theory the concentration of the purchasing operations seemed highly desirable, but in practice almost insuperable obstacles had to be overcome. By the middle of 1916 the entire machinery of the Russian food supply had completely broken down. Extraordinary efforts were required to provision the army, and the Government was compelled to resort to a system of strict centralization for this purpose. During the second half of 1916 a conference was held at General Headquarters, in which representatives of the two unions took part. Notwithstanding some very strenuous objections raised at this conference, the Government decided to prohibit altogether private purchases of certain foodstuffs (wheat and rye flour, grits of all kinds, oats, barley, hay, and salt). It was suggested that the institutions of the two unions at the front should obtain these commodities from the nearest depots of the Army Supply Department according to estimates to be submitted beforehand.

This system, which may perhaps be correct in theory, gave rise to serious difficulties in practice. The bureaucratic machinery of the Army Supply Department, in the first place, was working very slowly and irregularly. In the second place, the authorities in charge of the army depots refused to acknowledge their obligations toward the unions. Another difficulty was that the budgetary system, by making it necessary for each institution to apply exclusively to a specified depot of the Army Supply Department, gave occasion for endless misunderstandings, for the zemstvo institutions had frequently to change their quarters, with the shifting of the front. The Army Supply Department declined to supply large quantities of goods to the central depots of the Zemstvo Union at the front, often giving as an excuse that it had not sufficient stock. Meanwhile the Central Committee likewise met with increasing difficulties in buying sufficient supplies of provisions, for it had to

reckon with local regulations and ordinances issued by the commissioners of the Ministry of Agriculture, who were empowered to impose embargoes. But even when the consignment of goods was not prohibited, there was still the difficulty of obtaining without delay the necessary rolling stock, a difficulty that was constantly increasing.

Under such conditions the supply department of the Union in Moscow found it impossible to carry on its operations with the promptitude that was essential, and was compelled to overlook the independent and chaotic purchasing operations undertaken by individual institutions at the front. It was clearly realized on every hand that the anarchy in supply would ruin the country; but the paper schemes devised in Petrograd as a remedy were in any case doomed to failure, owing to bureaucratic red tape. The purchasing agents of the Union simply carried on their operations by ignoring completely all the barriers and obstacles that were being put in their way by these interminable ordinances, laws, and regulations. The following complaints received in November, 1916, from the Union's committee of the southwestern front afford an illustration of the nature of these obstacles.

Every day [reads the report] brings new instances of the endless obstacles that are being placed in the way of the purchasing commission in its work of buying goods for the institutions of the Zemstvo Union. These obstacles consist principally in the embargoes in the purchase and conveyance of one or another kind of commodity. Lately, it has frequently happened that goods which had been already purchased have been requisitioned. Such measures, apart from the direct harm that they cause, tend to undermine the confidence of the officers of the Union, since they nullify all their work. Frequently a permit issued by the commissioners of the Ministry of Agriculture, which could not be used immediately for lack of rolling-stock, is revoked without warning. Orders given and dispositions taken in our favor by the commissioners of the Ministry are rendered null and void by unexpected orders from higher authorities. A large number of purchases already concluded have had to be cancelled on account of failure to obtain permits for loading and consigning. . . . There are instances when a request supported by the military authorities had been rejected by the Special Council on Food Supply. . . . To these embargoes and requisitions we have to add the obstacles placed in our way by the railways, as, for instance, sudden embargoes on consignments in certain directions,

whilst the department is being deluged with telegrams stating that the front is desperately in need of provisions. . . . Lastly, the decision that no special transport orders are to be issued to the Unions because of the extreme disorganization of the railway traffic and that they are to depend entirely on the Army Supply Department. The organization of the latter, however, suffers from many defects, its stocks are frequently inadequate, the requests of such zemstvo institutions as canteens, infant asylums, and the like, are often rejected and when granted it is only after considerable delays. . . .[33]

Accurate figures covering the entire period of the operation of the zemstvo depots at the front are not available. To convey an idea of the scope of their work, however, we shall here quote some figures regarding the turnover of the depots of the southwestern front, which ranked second.[34]

In the total turnover of the depots of the southwestern front up to January, 1916, clothing and underwear rank first in value with 41.94 per cent of the total. Next follow: foodstuffs, 20.45 per cent; harness and transport accessories, 15.66 per cent; domestic equipment, 9.57 per cent; fodder, 6.78 per cent; tools and technical goods, 1.53 per cent; oil, petroleum, and benzine, 1.14 per cent; building materials, 1.03 per cent; and sundry articles, 2.90 per cent.

Each union's committee of the front maintained a special transport section which had charge of the transport of stores. Every possible method of conveyance was used. In the Caucasus, for instance, camel caravans were making their way along narrow mountain tracks under the flag of the Zemstvo Union. On Lakes Urmia and Van, again, there were zemstvo barges and tugs at work. On the Dnieper and its tributaries on the southwestern front a vast fleet of barges was busy transporting cargoes. As for the motor lorries imported from abroad, they began to reach the front only during the second half of the War, and even then it was found impossible to use them as extensively as had been expected, owing to the bad condition of the roads.

In these circumstances it was inevitable that horse-drawn vehicles should remain till the very end of the campaign the principal means of transport along these roads. Down to September 15, 1916, the

[33] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 52-53, pp. 253-254.
[34] *Ibid.*, Nos. 45-46, pp. 138-139.

institutions of the unions at the front owned 58,447 horses, and they required 24,000 more horses before January 1, 1917.[35] A considerable number of the horses were used for the transport of the wounded, and the others were employed in connection with the depots.

The organization of the veterinary service was along the same lines as that of the medical service, with a central bureau and veterinary boards attached to the commissioner of the Zemstvo Union for each army; they maintained a large number of veterinary hospitals at the front and behind it, and they opened a number of first aid stations near the front lines, served by visiting veterinary surgeons. The numbers of the trained veterinary staff, especially in the lower ranks, were small, so that it was necessary to open special training schools in hospitals behind the front. The veterinary service of the zemstvos attended not only to the medical treatment of horses belonging to the Union, but it also undertook purely sanitary measures. Thus, it saw to it that all the horses acquired by the Union were inoculated against infectious diseases. By the middle of 1916 each front had about ten permanent veterinary hospitals accommodating from one hundred to five hundred animals each, apart from the dispensary service established.

The Auxiliary Institutions of the Union.

We have already stated that numerous auxiliary services had been established to meet the needs of the hospitals and canteens of the Union. Bakeries, tailors' shops, bathing and disinfecting chambers, farriers' shops, boilers for supplying hot water, and many similar undertakings, had been organized both at the front and behind it. At first these establishments catered only to the needs of the Zemstvo Union; gradually, however, they were obliged to extend their activities and, in response to the wish of the military authorities, to adapt them to the requirements of the army as well as their own. In any regiment one was sure to find a sufficient number of artisans and skilled workers capable of carrying out all necessary repairs. Under the conditions prevailing at the front, however, no one in the regiment could possibly undertake the burden of organizing this work

[35] *Kratki Obzor Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*) of the work of the Union of Zemstvos, Moscow, 1917, p. 64.

on an adequate scale apart from the fact that neither raw material nor tools were available. Consequently, having observed the good work done by the repair shops of the Zemstvo Union, the military authorities were only too glad to detail their skilled workers to these shops to enable them to carry out urgent repairs.

One of the most pressing needs of the army was for boots, and their careful preservation was imperative. The Union's committee of the northern front endeavored to assist by establishing special shops which sold leather and cobblers' tools at a comparatively low price. These endeavors, however, did not prove altogether successful, so that the committee was compelled to enlist the assistance of boot-repair shops such as were already at work on some of the other fronts. A large shop was opened at Smolensk, estimated to be capable of producing 5,000 pairs of new boots and executing 10,000 repairs a month. It was found, however, that there were considerable difficulties and much loss of time in communicating with the troops at the front and in the delivery of boots in need of repair. Consequently, forty movable zemstvo boot-repair shops were organized at different times along the western front and provided with the necessary transport facilities, materials, and tools. Each of these shops employed thirty or thirty-five men working for wages and headed by expert foremen. The daily output of a shop was about 150 "major" repairs. Using depots of the Zemstvo Union attached to each army as a base, the repair shops visited the various military units. The work done was recorded in each regiment on a special form, and upon presentation of this the amounts due were subsequently paid by the Army Supply Department.

The army authorities requested the Zemstvo Union to help them in an entirely different field. After severe fighting, it was found that many rifles were in need of repairs, and that a large number of worn rifles might by repair be rendered serviceable. The Zemstvo Union organized repair shops to which all damaged rifles were sent to be cleaned and repaired. Soon after, at the request of the military authorities, the Union also organized shops for the repair of field telephones. The Union found it also necessary to station meteorologists along the front to keep the army informed of changes in atmospheric conditions that might prove propitious to the gas attacks of the enemy.

These and similar measures undertaken by the Zemstvo Union at-

tracted a great deal of favorable comment and approval in the army. The appearance of motor lorries carrying the complete equipment necessary for the repair of field guns produced a particularly good impression upon the military authorities. This repair shop was under the management of the engineers of the Zemstvo Union and, according to an official report, "brilliantly passed its theoretical and practical tests and rendered immense services to the artillery. It was ready for work within twelve minutes after its arrival and, in case of need, it could be dismantled and packed up again within six minutes."[36]

The high prices, poor quality, and local scarcity of certain commodities for which there was a large demand, forced the Zemstvo Union to establish numberless producing enterprises of their own. Of the Union's tanneries, which gradually extended to the whole country, we shall speak in the next chapter. We may mention here the large and successful soap factory in Kiev,[37] the chemical works in Kiev, and the shops for the making of wagons, hot water boilers, field kitchens, disinfection machinery, furniture, and other equipment for hospitals. Many abandoned sawmills were set to work again. A vast production of woodwork, which was widely used in the army, was started, embracing everything from portable buildings and river barges to office desks. On the western front the Union rented important brickyards and opened factories for the production of albuminous glue and a factory for the manufacture of oxygen. On the southwestern front the collection of old bones was organized for the production of bone meal, whilst in Galicia attempts were made to resume the operation of the salt mines and oil wells. It is impossible within the brief space of this chapter to enumerate all the undertakings organized by the Union, especially as so many of them were begun only a short time before the outbreak of the Revolution and we have no data regarding their ultimate fate. The list of the institutions at the front maintained by the Zemstvo Union on November 1, 1916, contains 33 factories and 208 workshops of all descriptions.

Apart from these many-sided activities, the Zemstvo Union was doing everything within its power to supply labor to the population of the war zone. As the ruined farmers were not always capable of

[36] *Kratki Obzor Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*), p. 71.

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73; also *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 29, pp. 156-157.

carrying out the work in the fields, large zemstvo forces were organized to cultivate derelict lands and help with sowing and harvesting. On the southwestern front some 50,000 deciatines[38] were at one time cultivated by labor of this kind.

In general, it should be pointed out that the directors of the zemstvo were confronted with an entirely different set of problems at the front during the second half of the War. The first year of the War was taken up mainly with the care of the sick and wounded, the struggle against infectious disease, and sanitary and preventive measures. This involved the mobilization and application of the medical resources of the Union. After the middle of 1915, however, but more particularly in 1916, it was the turn of the technical and engineering forces of the zemstvos to assume the leading rôle, and these were now called upon to take vigorous measures for the benefit of the army. Every central institution of the Union now organized a technical and engineering section or board, whose expenditure and work were constantly growing and expanding. Some idea of the scope of this work may be obtained from the following data on the building activities of the zemstvo on the western front.[39] During that year the Union erected 2,034 buildings and 305 other structures, such as bridges, wells, etc., at the cost of 8,000,000 rubles. At the close of 1916 the technical board of the western front was spending about 3,000,000 rubles a month on the purchase of building materials.

The Organization of the Union at the Front.

The organization of the Union of Zemstvos developed gradually as circumstances required. As a general rule, the presiding board of the committee of the front was appointed by the Central Committee of the Union. It was composed of all the commissioners of the Union working at the front in question.[40] The committees used to hold conferences and endeavored to lay down general rules for the settlement of all the general problems arising in the course of their work. In

[38] One deciatine = 2.7 acres.

[39] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 48, pp. 150-155; Nos. 52-53, p. 263; Nos. 64-66, pp. 104-105.

[40] The organization of the Union of Zemstvos coincided with the main military divisions; that is in Europe the northern, western, southwestern, and later, the Rumanian fronts, and in Asia, the Caucasian front.

principle, all the institutions of the Union in the army were supposed to be subject to the authority of the committee of the front; in practice, however, the responsibility for the work rested upon the chairman of the committee of the front (sometimes referred to as the high commission of the front).

The organization of the Union was not free from criticism. Much tact and a great deal of experience in public work was required from the leaders of the Union, so that without giving undue offense and without hindering the initiative of this or that particular official, they should secure adherence to the instructions of headquarters, while acting in strict conformity with the requests of the military authorities.

The direction of the routine work was left to the commissioners of the Union who were attached to large army units or were appointed for a particular area. The separate services were controlled by special departments of the committees of the front, which distributed supplies and money, issued instructions, and coördinated their activities. Such departments were created as occasion might require and they were not always successful in drawing a distinct line between their respective fields of work. Thus, for instance, the canteens on the southwestern front were dependent either on the department of military communications, or the department of local relief, or the department of relief of refugees, or, lastly, on the department of trench workers, according to the date and place of their formation. The departments acted independently in their requests for supplies; they followed their own rules and standards, with the result that frequent conflicts occurred.

No one could possibly forecast how long the War would last and foresee the needs that would arise in its course. Every day presented new and unexpected problems. New institutions sprang up one after another, but at the beginning it was impossible to plan for a harmonious coördination in the working of the different parts of the machine. As the War continued, however, friction within the Union made itself more and more felt. An attempt had to be made, in the interest of smooth working, to reduce this chaos to order and system, and it became manifest that a constitution was indispensable for the regulation of the vast enterprise. An organization that was spending 10,000,000 rubles a month and controlled thousands of sub-

sidiary institutions and hundreds of thousands of employees could not possibly go on without a clearly formulated scheme.

Such a reconstruction was gradually carried out during the second half of the War. Broadly, it followed the existing models of the zemstvo institutions as they had functioned before the War. It should be noted, however, that none of the committees of the front was able to complete the reorganization. The Union's committee of the western front succeeded in going farthest in this attempt at reconstruction, and we shall briefly consider the general outline of the organization at that front as it appeared toward the close of 1916.

The committee of the front met on the initiative of its chairman or of one of his two deputies. These meetings, which usually lasted two to three days, resembled the meetings of the zemstvo assemblies. As a rule, they were attended by about twenty commissioners and a large number of other zemstvo officials, the latter, however, having only a consultative voice, without the right to vote. They examined questions of principle, relating either to reforms in the organization or to fundamental changes in the work of the Union at the front. The chairman of the committee and his two deputies were required to see that its resolutions were duly executed. The chairman spent most of the time visiting the front, maintaining contact with the army authorities, receiving their orders, and settling on the spot such problems as might arise in the course of the work of local institutions. The deputy chairmen remained at the headquarters of the committee of the western front at Minsk, whence they attended to the current affairs of the Union.

As it was difficult for the commissioners to leave their headquarters often, the committee of the front met only on rare occasions. For this reason a special executive board was constituted which met daily and examined the more important business. The board consisted of the chairman of the committee, his two deputies, and seven members elected by the committee from among the commissioners. Matters for discussion were submitted to the board either by the chairman or by heads of the department, who had a right to vote in matters affecting their respective departments. When appropriations of funds were examined, a representative of the audit department had to be present at the meeting.

The Union's committee of the western front at Minsk had the following departments: (1) medical bureau; (2) department for the supply of materials; (3) technical board; (4) department of field detachments; (5) department of retail stores; (6) department of transport; (7) department of relief of children; (8) leather department; (9) automobile department; (10) audit department; (11) department of general management; (12) liaison department; (13) department of statistics; (14) legal department; (15) accounting department; (16) department of providing food and clothing for the employees; and (17) labor bureau. In addition to these seventeen departments there were several special sections whose business it was to make timely preparation for a liquidation of the huge organization of the Union. The number of men and women employed was very large; for instance the committee of the front employed more than five hundred bookkeepers.

Such was the organization at the center. Outside this center, likewise, the institutions of the Union had assumed in 1916 certain well-defined forms, and toward the end of 1916 a scheme had been worked out on the western front for a regional organization.

In each region, whether at the front or behind the lines, committees were formed and commissioners of the Zemstvo Union were placed in charge. The membership of these committees included a commissioner appointed by the Union's Committee of the western front at Minsk, together with his deputy and the regional doctor. These regional committees represented, on a smaller scale, a type of organization similar to that of the central body at Minsk, and each of them had direct charge of the zemstvo institutions located within the region occupied by the unit of the army to which it was attached. A greater amount of independence was enjoyed by the field detachments which operated near the front lines on the very outskirts of the Union's field of activity. But even these detachments were gradually being placed in a subordinate position to the committee of the front, which resulted in a better coördination of their work.[41]

Toward the close of 1916 the organization above described directed on the western front the work of 1,484 zemstvo institutions and more than 15,000 employees, excluding the lower ranks.

[41] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, No. 48, pp. 146-150.

CHAPTER XII

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE UNION OF ZEMSTVOS IN THE THIRD YEAR OF THE WAR

The Organization of Supply.

The supply work of the Union of Zemstvos began, it will be remembered, with making purchases for the needs of the zemstvo hospitals in the interior of Russia. Then the Army Supply Department placed with the Union orders for warm clothing and underwear worth millions of rubles. The organization for the prompt delivery of these articles was being built up and improved at headquarters, whilst at the front the work undertaken by the zemstvo institutions in new directions was constantly expanding and growing in importance.

At first the zemstvo organs at the front were still able to find in the local markets (Poland, Galicia, and Tiflis) many of the articles that they required, and in particular foodstuffs; but with the retreat of the Russian army, a large number of markets were lost. Agents from the front then began to appear in the interior provinces to make purchases, giving rise to undesirable competition among themselves, as well as with the agents of the Government. This led the Central Committee of the Union to intervene in the organization of the supply for the committees of the front. It began to insist upon the preparation of estimates, and, after overcoming a great many difficulties, succeeded in obtaining them.

At this stage the Committee was confronted with the difficult problem of supplying the front not only with articles required by the hospitals, but also with foodstuffs, metals, tools and machinery, etc. Conditions had by this time changed considerably, for most of the markets were now entirely dependent upon the dispositions of the government commissioners. The prices of many articles were either regulated or fixed, and the result was that goods began to disappear from the markets. Purchases in foreign countries were rendered difficult by the restrictions imposed by the Government

upon payment in foreign currency for orders placed abroad, so that such orders had to pass through a large number of departments before being authorized. Lastly, transport by rail was carried out, or, at all events, was supposed to be carried out, in accordance with a definite schedule; yet in practice it depended entirely upon the rather arbitrary decision of a number of departments. These and other obstacles greatly complicated the work of the Union.

In February, 1916, the Central Committee of the Union accepted from the Army Supply Department orders for winter clothing and underwear, on the assumption that its own institutions would require for the year, as heretofore, about 10,000,000 articles of clothing. The estimates, however, which were received in May of the same year from the front and the interior called for 39,000,000 articles and the Union was compelled to apply to the Army Supply Department for the necessary materials. Permission was obtained to use factories that had contracted to work for the Government. The supply of materials, however, developed very slowly and did not reach the stipulated volume until September. Another difficulty was the shortage of labor. The Central Committee, therefore, instructed the committees of the front to organize an independent production of underwear. It also forwarded to them cloth ready cut, but not yet made up into clothing. In this manner the committees of the front were able to complete about 5,000,000 pieces of clothing. In the interior the manufacturing of clothing and underwear for the Zemstvo Union was organized in eleven provinces so that, in addition to the 32 issuing offices situated in Moscow, 243 different institutions, including 131 coöperative societies and 70 charitable societies were now engaged in making underwear and clothing and the number of women so employed was about 50,000. Only 21.8 per cent of the Union's output was intended for the use of its own institutions, whilst the remaining 78.2 per cent went to the Army Supply Department. The last government order on record came in July, 1917: the Zemstvo Union was therein requested to supply 2,670,000 short fur coats, 1,133,000 felt boots, and 2,000,000 pairs of socks, representing a value of about 70,000,000 rubles.

With a view to retaining a certain independence in making purchases abroad, the Central Committee of the Union obtained the authorization of the Government to open current accounts in for-

eign banks.[1] The operations of the purchasing commissions sent to London and New York made good progress. These commissions supplied principally medical goods, including more than two hundred different articles, absorbent cotton, coffee, and pepper. The budget for 1917 provided for purchases amounting to more than 20,000,000 rubles, including 6,000,000 rubles to be spent on purchases for the Union of Towns. In America, leather and boots were bought, as well as large quantities of tools and accessories. For automobiles and spare parts alone, the orders placed in the United States amounted to $1,500,000, in England to £100,000, and in Italy to 1,000,000 lire. All shipments were directed via Archangel but the new railroad line leading to this port was unable to cope with the traffic. It thus became necessary to establish a special bureau at Archangel which obtained possession of cargoes consigned to the Union and made special arrangements for their dispatch.

Brief mention has already been made of the reorganization that was carried out in the purchasing machinery at the center. It was no longer proposed that the reorganized supply department should attend to all the individual purchases. The purchasing commission at Moscow now acted merely as a general directing organ. It examined samples of goods and prices, and issued permits for individual purchases exceeding 5,000 rubles in value. As for the investigation of market conditions, the necessary negotiations on the spot, and the submission of applications for permits to buy and consign goods, these were all left to the various purchasing commissions scattered throughout Russia. In these commissions the agents of the committees of the front took a very active part. Goods were compared with the samples both at the place of loading and at the point of destination. Transactions not exceeding 5,000 rubles in value were negotiated independently by the purchasing commissions, and occasionally even by the agents of the committees of the front (in emergency cases not provided for by the budgets).

The central supply department was largely occupied with conflicts with the railway officials. All the requests made by the Zemstvo Union for an equal treatment of its consignments with those of the Army Supply Department remained unsuccessful. According to the

[1] Lloyd's Bank in England, the National City Bank in America, the Enskielda Bank in Sweden, the Handels Bank in Denmark, and the Comptoir National d'Escompte in France.

schedules of consignments covering the period from May to November, 1916, the Union applied for a total of 4,969 freight cars, but obtained only 1,887, whilst of the 3,702 cars demanded for extraordinary (express) consignments, only 1,683 were provided. The officials of the Union were in fact reduced to extorting the necessary permits for cars from the railway officials, by personal appeals, persuasions, and protests, and only in this manner did they succeed in loading about four hundred additional cars a month, outside of, and often contrary to, all schedules. During the navigation season of 1916, river transport was utilized, so that it was found possible to send by water 2,345,000 puds of cargoes.

Merely to obtain railroad cars and load them, however, was not sufficient; a constant watch had also to be kept on the actual movement of the goods. For this purpose the supply department maintained a special force of convoy conductors, of whom not less than 150 accompanied the trains every month. Lost cars had to be traced and pursued all over Russia, and for this purpose likewise a special staff of employees had to be maintained. These men succeeded, among other things, in recovering more than 17,000 puds of copper worth 300,000 rubles; about 70,000 puds of leather worth 8,000,000 rubles; 11,000 puds of medical goods unobtainable in the Russian market, and so on.

The enormous quantity of goods converging from all sides upon Moscow naturally required correspondingly vast storage facilities. The depots of the Zemstvo Union, scattered all over the city, were crowded. It soon became necessary to devote serious thought to the problem of reorganizing the entire system of storage. The result was that a piece of land with three sheds was taken on lease at the Moscow-Windau railway station and eight new sheds were constructed providing storage accommodation in the vicinity of railway line itself. The central depot alone cost 300,000 rubles, and toward the end of 1916, 6,000,000 rubles worth of goods were stored in these premises.

Supply of Leather and Hides.

It is probable that never previously in the history of Russia had cattle been slaughtered on so vast a scale as in the years of the War. The army itself required huge quantities of meat, though only on very rare occasions in the past had meat appeared on the peasants'

tables. But in spite of this extensive killing of cattle, a great shortage of leather and hides indispensable to the army made itself everywhere felt at the very beginning of the War. The collection of hides was in no way regulated, and the tanning of leather was left imperiled, since previous to the War the bulk of the tanning extracts used to be imported from Germany. At the front, the hides of slaughtered animals were either thrown away or sold by the troops to casual buyers. The result was a wild speculation in hides, and there were even instances of Russian hides being sold to the enemy.

In the meantime the Union's committee of the southwestern front became aware that Galicia produced a considerable portion of the boots used in Austria-Hungary. The manufacturing of boots was a popular form of cottage industry. The Russian troops, on occupying the country, found about 190 tanneries where a certain quantity of tanning extracts had been left behind by the Austrians. With proper organization, it should have been possible to resume production in these factories and thus assure a monthly supply of 100,000 to 150,000 pair of boots for the army.

The Zemstvo Union offered its services to the Army Supply Department for the collection of hides on the southwestern front, and undertook to guarantee the subsequent distribution of hides wherever needed by the army. The negotiations were concluded at the end of January, 1915, and the Union was granted a monopoly of the collection of hides at the front. During the month of February the organization was completed and a hundred expert tanners were hired by the Union and were distributed along the front. They attended to the reception of the freshly salted hides at the depots of the Army Supply Department, sorted and loaded them, and sent them on to the warehouses of the Zemstvo Union. During the first months of 1915 about 50,000 hides were received every month; for each hide the Union paid to the Army Supply Department from 2.50 rubles to 3.50 rubles.

With the accumulation of hides in the warehouses the problem of their further disposal had to be considered. The supplies of tanning extracts were inadequate. The only large tanning extract factory in Russia, owned by a French company, was situated in Kiev; but on the outbreak of the War the factory had been closed by the owners, who had returned to France. The director of the factory refused to entertain the suggestion that operations should be resumed, protest-

ing that some machines were out of repair and that it would cost too much to make them serviceable. On the suggestion of the Zemstvo Union, the military authorities thereupon requisitioned the factory and handed it over to the Union's committee of the southwestern front to be set working once more. Within a fortnight the entire plant was cleaned, repaired, equipped with new machinery, and put into operation. At first, in the spring of 1915, it produced 10,000 to 12,000 puds of tanning extracts a month, as against a maximum of 10,000 puds which it had been producing before the War; later, the output was increased to 18,000 puds. With 15,000 puds a month it was already possible to assure the tanning of 50,000 hides a month, which furnished sufficient material for 150,000 pair of army boots. Hides and tanning extracts were supplied exclusively to those organizations which undertook to supply boots to the army, in quantities corresponding to the contracts that they signed. The Union's committee of the southwestern front also entered into contracts with several private factories for the production of considerable quantities of sole leather, of which the shortage was acute. The hides and tanning extracts were issued to these factories from the zemstvo warehouses. The Union was thus able to sell sole leather at thirty rubles a pud, when the market price was ninety rubles.

Starting with thirty-five depots of hides in March, 1915, the committee had already seventy-four depots by September, and by the end of the summer the average monthly receipts of hides amounted to 100,000 pieces. In June the collection of hides became very difficult, owing to the retreat of the Russian army from Galicia. In September, 1915, in view of the successful work accomplished in the collection and distribution of the raw hides, the Army Supply Department offered the Union of Zemstvos to extend its activities to the western and northern fronts. This proposal was accepted, and a number of receiving depots were established, with the principal storehouse at Minsk, and later at Smolensk.

In August, 1915, a similar agreement was concluded in the Caucasus between the Zemstvo Union and the Army Supply Department. Collecting more than 20,000 hides a month, the Tiflis Committee provided also for the salting and drying, and dispatched the hides to Moscow at the earliest opportunity. It did not assume any obligation, however, for the distribution of the raw hides for manufacturing purposes. Thus a certain quantity of raw hides from the

Caucasus was placed at the disposal of the Central Committee of the Union during the latter part of 1915. As early as the spring of 1915, the Committee of the Union in the Caucasus had held a number of conferences of local experts to ascertain what plants suitable for the manufacture of tanning extracts were available in the Caucasus and how they were distributed. At the expense of the Union a number of expeditions were sent out to Trans-Caucasia, and extensive tests and laboratory experiments were conducted. They yielded most gratifying results, for it was found that certain plants common in Trans-Caucasia contained a high percentage tannic acid and this not only in the stems or cores but also in the leaves.[2] A commission of experts expressed itself in favor of organizing in the Caucasus a factory of tanning extracts. The same idea had originally suggested itself to the Zemstvo Union on an entirely different occasion. After the retreat from Galicia there was a moment when it seemed as if even Kiev might have to be abandoned to the enemy, and the Zemstvo Union was naturally reluctant to lose the tanning extract factory in that city, which was working at high pressure. It was decided, therefore, to transfer the plant to a safer place. A special committee was sent to the northern Caucasus and the Black Sea coast, to find a suitable site for the factory. The city of Maikop in the Kuban territory of the Cossacks was selected because of the vast oak forests in the vicinity, covering an area of about 400,000 deciatines. Soon, however, the situation at Kiev was relieved, so that it was possible to avoid the removal of the factory, an operation that would have involved a complete closing down for a period of five to six months. Nevertheless Maikop was not left out of further projects and the Zemstvo Union decided to establish in this city a new factory with an annual production of 350,000 puds of extracts. This plant was intended to serve in the future as a model for the practical development of the Caucasus in the manufacture of tanning extracts,—an industry that was hitherto unknown in Russia. In spite of the extraordinary difficulties in the way of building such a factory, and especially the difficulty of providing equipment, work was begun in April, 1916, and early in 1917 the plant was complete and ready to begin production. The Department of War aided the Union in this enterprise by the loan of large sums.

[2] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), No. 24, pp. 51-67.

At the close of 1915 the Army Supply Department decided to abandon the primitive method of driving the cattle to the front on the hoof; the animals were now to be slaughtered in the interior. The result was that the supply of hides to the Union's committees of the front was considerably reduced, whilst in the interior of the country there was a repetition of what had occurred at the front at the beginning of the War, that is to say, vast supplies of hides escaped altogether the control of the army authorities. Negotiations were now begun between the Army Supply Department and the Zemstvo Union with a view to inducing the latter to undertake the whole business of collecting, storing, and distributing hides throughout the Empire. In principle, the Central Committee of the Union accepted the proposal, but at the height of these negotiations, in November, 1915, a new institution, created by the Council of Ministers and known as the Committee for the Leather Industry, came into operation. This body was composed of government officials and a small number of representatives of leather manufacturers and merchants. Neither the Zemstvo Union nor the Union of Towns was represented on this body. The Government hastened to take the whole business under its own control in order to prevent the further expansion in this direction, of the work of the unions. The Committee for the Leather Industry attempted to dispense altogether with the services of the Zemstvo Union, but without success, for in April, 1916, it found itself compelled to appeal to the Union for help, and requested it to communicate its plan for the collection, storage, and distribution of hides. The Government also desired to know on what terms the Zemstvo Union would be prepared to undertake the entire work.

It is unnecessary to describe here the protracted and tedious negotiations that followed, during which the Union was left for months without replies to its communications. At the end of July the Union learned from reports in the press that the Government had issued on July 7, 1916, a decree relating to the registration and distribution of raw hides and leather goods. This left the whole business under the general management and control of the government committee. All that the Zemstvo Union was asked to do was merely to deal with the collection of hides in private slaughterhouses throughout the Empire. The hides of cattle slaughtered for the needs of the Army Supply Department and of the Ministry of Agriculture, on

the other hand, remained under the exclusive control of the government committee. Interminable negotiations once more began, to be ended by the outbreak of the Revolution.

The problems of the leather industry thus remained unsolved even in the third year of the War. Some zemstvos, however (Vyatka, Ekaterinoslav, Ryazan, Samara, and Taurida) started as early as the latter half of 1916 to collect hides under the provisions of the decree of July 7.[3]

Factories and Workshops.

It will be clear from the preceding pages that market conditions compelled the Zemstvo Union from the very outset to organize the buying and manufacture of whatever articles it required for the purpose of its work. Thus came into existence numerous workshops where articles of clothing and underwear were made. A large number of temporary workshops were established for the manufacture of suspension cots, stretchers, mattresses, furniture, and other articles needed by the hospitals. These workshops had only a minor portion of the work done on the premises, leaving most of it to outworkers. This was the case of the tent factory, among others, opened in Moscow in October, 1915. Beginning with ten workers, it very quickly expanded, for it received large orders not only from the zemstvo institutions, but also from the military authorities. At the close of 1916, 850 persons were already employed at this factory, in addition to about 3,000 outworkers engaged on its orders. Besides the tents, portable hutments were manufactured, and in the third year of the War this plant was producing thirty different types of tents, such as tents for the staff, for operating rooms, for dressing rooms, for officers' quarters, etc. It also manufactured twenty different types of hutments to be used for living quarters, disinfection rooms, laundries, bathhouses, operating rooms, garages, repair shops, dining rooms, etc. It produced, moreover, sail-cloth articles, such as

[3] Among the numerous articles dealing with the leather industry which appeared in *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) the following may be mentioned: Nos. 12-13, pp. 67-71; No. 20, pp. 44-45; No. 24, pp. 50-67; No. 27, pp. 47-50; No. 34, pp. 61-85; Nos. 37-38, pp. 54-58, 61-68; No. 48, pp. 21-24; No. 49, pp. 27-38; No. 50, pp. 11-15; Nos. 52-53, pp. 171-174; Nos. 58-60, pp. 5-10. *See also* Zagorsky, *State Control of Industry in Russia during the War* (Yale University Press, 1928) in this series of *Economic and Social History of the World War.*

trench coats, stretchers, wagon covers, buckets, camp furniture, and so on. The value of goods manufactured by this factory in the course of its first year was nearly 8,000,000 rubles.

A factory of sanitary equipment commenced operations almost simultaneously with the tent factory, in October, 1915, and on a similarly modest scale. Beginning with not more than seventy-two workers, it repaired water boilers, kettles, apparatus for bathhouses and laundries, and similar articles. In the third year of the War the buildings of the factory already covered an area of over five acres, consisting of eight separate buildings and three warehouses. The number of workers had now risen to more than seven hundred. During the first three months the plant produced finished goods valued at 126,000 rubles; during the second quarter the output had risen to 561,000 rubles; during the third it amounted to 793,000 rubles; and the total production for the entire year was valued at 2,500,000 rubles. The articles manufactured by this plant included field kitchens, disinfection chambers, laundry machinery, hot-water boilers, portable bathhouses, and various dishes and kitchen utensils.

The acute shortage of drugs and medicines, and the difficulty of obtaining sufficient quantities from abroad, forced the Central Committee of the Unions to undertake the manufacture of such goods. A brewery was bought by the Moscow zemstvo in the vicinity of the city, and in August, 1916, it was set to work as chemico-pharmaceutical works. The scope of production was gradually increased. The aim of the Union was to establish the new industry on a permanent basis and to maintain home production of the medical goods required by the zemstvo hospitals in peace time as well as in war. The works were provided with up-to-date scientific equipment. It was placed under the general supervision of the medical bureau of the Central Committee of the Union. The latter also found it necessary to increase considerably the Russian output of thermometers and to organize a special X-ray bureau to meet the demand for X-ray apparatus and appliances.

The factories and workshops of the Zemstvo Unions were rather modest undertakings and fell far short of the European and American standards, for by the end of 1916 merely 2,500 hands were employed in the whole of them. The manufacture of articles of military equipment and munitions developed on a much bigger scale but this will be discussed in Chapter XIII.

Purchase of Horses.

The department for the purchase of horses was appointed by the Central Committee of the Union at the close of 1914, at the time when the field detachments of the Zemstvo Union were being organized. It gradually developed into a very large organization, operating not only in European Russia, but also in Siberia, Turkestan, and northern Caucasus. In the estimates of the department for October, 1916, mention is made even of China and Persia as sources of supply for horses. At first the Union's demand for horses was very small, and during the retreat of the army from the German front it had dwindled to as little as 362, and in one instance to only 134 per month. Generally speaking, the monthly requirement during 1915 never exceeded 1,500 horses; at the end of that year, however, it rose to the very impressive figure of 5,000 per month. The total number of horses purchased by the department was about 50,000 representing a value of about 12,000,000 rubles.

The task of the department was by no means an easy one. Requisitions of horses by the Ministry of War went on almost without interruption and it was necessary therefore to discover territories where the Government was willing to permit private purchases. With each succeeding month of the War the number of such territories dwindled and they became more and more remote from the headquarters of the purchasing agents of the department, which had been established at Moscow, Orel, and in northern Caucasus. Not only had a general authorization to be obtained to buy horses in a given district, but the consent of the local authorities was required for the dispatch of the horses when purchased. Lastly, and this was the most difficult part of the transaction, a sufficient quantity of rolling stock had to be found for the transport of horses.

How much time had to be spent on these various steps may be gathered from the example of several large purchases made in Siberia. In these instances it was found impossible to transport horses that had been bought at the beginning of July, 1916, until the close of September. In the meantime the animals had to be fed and cared for, with the result that there was a considerable increase in their total cost. The conveyance from such remote regions likewise involved heavy extra expense, but it proved nevertheless more profitable to buy horses at this distance than nearer the center. Thus, in

1916 the average price of a horse in Siberia was only 141 rubles, the extra expense incurred until arrival at Moscow amounting to 43 rubles per horse. At that time the average cost of a horse in European Russia was 289 rubles, with incidental expenses amounting to 31 rubles. In general, however, the price of horses bought by the Union steadily increased. About the end of 1915 the average price was 163 rubles, with incidental expenses of 31 rubles. During the first half of 1916 the price had risen to 208 rubles, plus 23 rubles. In the second half of the same year, the respective figures had reached 246 rubles, and 31 rubles.

The purchasing operations required a complicated organization on the spot. The resources of the territory had to be explored, a proper selection of horses had to be made, suitable pastures during the summer, and stables and fodder during the winter, had to be found until the animals could be entrained, and then they had to be conveyed either to Moscow or Orel. Here, again, the horses had to be fed until they could be delivered at the front. To provide an adequate supply of fodder at Orel and Moscow where as many as five hundred horses were constantly assembled, was a problem of considerable and increasing difficulty. At the Moscow stud, the average daily cost of maintaining a horse about the middle of 1916 was one ruble, of which amount about three-quarters went to the purchase of fodder and the rest to the care of the animals. In each territory there was a deputy commissioner of the Zemstvo Union with a staff of trained workers attached to his office, to deal with this work. These were sometimes confronted with quite unexpected tasks; thus, in the steppes of Orenburg, they found themselves compelled to buy herds of wild horses from the Kirghiz tribes and to break them in.

At Moscow the department was ordered to organize permanent transport within the city, for the conveyance of stores belonging to the Zemstvo Union. With the aid of this transport, which consisted of nearly five hundred drays and carts, millions of puds of stores were transported to the depots and loaded in the trains, the average cost per cartload of sixty to seventy-five puds being about nine rubles. This system of transport likewise involved a complicated organization with its own repair shops, blacksmiths' shops, harness makers, and other such auxiliary services.

The work of this department earned general appreciation. On many occasions the military authorities and the officials in charge of

the government stud farms, after inspecting the convoys of horses purchased by the Zemstvo Union, wrote letters praising their quality and expressing astonishment at the low prices. In June, 1917, the Ministry of War itself requested the Union to buy for the Ministry 30,000 horses for the artillery and transport services at the average cost of 285 rubles per head. This order was accepted for immediate execution and a special branch of the Union was opened for this purpose at Chelyabinsk, Siberia.[4]

Automobile Service.

The automobile service of the Zemstvo Union, which was inaugurated on a very modest scale, rapidly expanded into a vast and complex organization. The Zemstvo Union, at the outset, found it necessary to buy automobiles for service both at the front and in the interior. In May, 1915, a special automobile department was organized, to systematize and coördinate the work of the automobile services. At first this department carried on its functions in three small rooms with only five men. A year and a half later, there were already over 2,000 employees at work, distributed over several subdivisions, according to requirements. The automobile depots of the Union in Moscow usually had in stock a million rubles' worth of spare parts and accessories, of about 10,000 different descriptions. The central depot at Moscow did all the buying that was required for the maintenance of the automobile service. At the front, special shops were established for the repair of these automobiles, but hundreds of machines proved incapable of local repair and had to be sent to Moscow for a general overhauling. In November, 1915, an automobile shop was opened at Moscow, and it soon expanded into a regular factory with three hundred workers, who were engaged not only in repair of machines, but also in the production of spare parts which it would have required a great deal of time and expense to obtain from abroad.

Permanent schools for chauffeurs and merchants were established by the automobile department. At first they admitted only students of the higher technical schools. Hundreds of chauffeurs who had graduated in these courses were made available for work at the front in the automobile service of the Union, and proved very valu-

[4] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 37-38, pp. 69-76; No. 48, pp. 29-32; Nos. 64-66, p. 77; *Kratki Obzor Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*), pp. 63-65.

able. During the second half of the War, when university students and pupils of the higher technical schools were mobilized for service in the army, it was found necessary to enlarge the class from which chauffeurs might be recruited. About the middle of July, 1916, women and girls were included among those authorized to receive training at these schools. They were warned by the Union of the dangers and difficulties that they were likely to experience in this work; nevertheless 430 women and girls applied for instruction. Many of these, however, had to be rejected, either because they were too young or physically unfit or because their educational qualifications were judged inadequate. During that year, fifty-eight women and twenty-eight men were admitted, and the examinations that were held two months later fully justified the experiment, since all the women students passed successfully and were found, upon the whole, to be even superior to the men in the theoretical understanding of their subject though slightly inferior in practical work. Where women students were deficient in educational preparation, they more than compensated this deficiency by zeal and diligence.

On March 1, 1916, the Zemstvo Union had at its disposal 754 machines and in September of the same year this number had risen to 1,410. Approximately 62 per cent consisted of light cars, 23 per cent of light lorries with ambulance equipment, and 14 per cent of heavy lorries. Most of the lighter cars were Fords and Studebakers, whilst most of the lorries were of the Selden and Harford type. The average cost of a machine was 5,500 rubles, which gives an idea of the large amounts invested in automobiles alone. Additions were continually being made to the stock. In March, 1916, 86,000 rubles were spent on the purchases of automobiles and accessories; in August the figure had increased to 3,877,800, and in September to 6,665,900 rubles. Toward the close of 1916 the maintenance of the automobile department alone had cost about 1,000,000 rubles, excluding the new purchases mentioned above.[5]

Relief of Prisoners of War.

The participation of the Zemstvo Union in the relief of prisoners of war was only indirect. Down to the end of 1915 this work was

[5] *Izvestia (Bulletin)*, No. 20, pp. 41-44; No. 29, pp. 61-68; Nos. 45-46, pp. 46-47; No. 48, pp. 34-36; No. 50, pp. 15-19; Nos. 52-53, pp. 186-192; Nos. 64-66, pp. 28-39.

concentrated entirely in the hands of official institutions such as the Red Cross Society. There was also the Committee for the Relief of Russian Prisoners of War, under the patronage of the Empress Alexandra. These institutions were in a position to obtain funds from the Treasury. Nevertheless, they proved incapable of developing the distribution of material relief on a large scale.

Among semi-official organizations, a committee formed by the municipality of Moscow was the only one that attempted to do something in this direction.[6] At the close of 1915 a small conference met at Stockholm, which was attended by representatives of the Red Cross Societies of Russia, Germany, Austria, and several neutral countries. The conference drew up regulations which greatly facilitated the practical efforts that were being made to relieve the hardships of prisoners of war. On this occasion the representatives of the Russian Government officially acknowledged the committee of the municipality of Moscow among the organizations engaged in the relief of Russian prisoners of war. This made it possible for the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns to undertake similar work and to form jointly with the committee of the municipality of Moscow, a body known as the "United Organization for the Relief of Prisoners of War." A corresponding department was established under the Zemstvo Union on November 6, 1915. In December this department addressed an appeal for assistance to all the local organs of the Union, and in January, 1916, it was already functioning smoothly.

The encouragement of initiative among the population was considered in this field, as in all others, the principal task of the Zemstvo Union. Needless to say, there was everywhere a sincere desire to come to the aid of brothers, fathers, and sons languishing in captivity in enemy countries. The difficulty, however, was that there were very few people in the backward rural communities of Russia who knew exactly how to set about it. Gradually the Union established contact with 436 local organizations for the relief of prisoners of war. These organizations were supplied with 60,000 free copies of a pamphlet describing in simple language the conditions under which Russian prisoners had to live in Germany and Austria, and suggesting ways and means of relief. Hundreds of thousands of

[6] *See* Astrov, *Effects of the War upon Russian Municipal Government and the All-Russian Union of Towns* in the volume *The War and the Russian Government* (Yale University Press, 1929), p. 258 *sqq.*

posters and handbills were sent to the local committees, to be displayed in public places. Members of the local committees of the Union delivered lectures on the same topic in the rural communities and assisted peasants in writing letters and sending parcels to prisoners of war.

Besides assisting direct individual help by relatives of the prisoners, the Union organized collective relief by supplying entire camps of prisoners of war with provisions. Donations for this purpose received by the Central Committee of the Union never reached a large amount, and the scale of the relief remained inadequate. Beginning with May, 1916, the United Organization for the Relief of Prisoners of War obtained a monthly grant of 450,000 rubles through the Committee of the Empress Alexandra; and later the grant was increased to 700,000 rubles. From this time onward it became possible to forward supplies on a much larger scale. Owing to the embargoes on certain commodities, the Union organized the purchase and dispatch of food parcels and other articles for Russian prisoners of war at The Hague, and other neutral cities. The Union received hundreds of orders every day for packages to be forwarded from neutral countries, this being the only way of supplying the prisoners with such articles as sugar, condensed milk, canned meat and fish, fresh bread, etc. But so many were the restrictions and prohibitions in the way of the relief operations that it seemed at times almost impossible to do anything. The military censorship delayed scores of thousands of letters addressed to prisoners of war or their relatives. It was forbidden to give the home address of the prisoner or his military unit; the enemy authorities, on the other hand, who obtained these data from each prisoner as a matter of registration routine, failed to use them to trace the prisoner and to deliver to him letters or packages. The result was that large numbers of letters and packages would be returned. As stated above, there was an embargo on the export from Russia of many commodities, and in the spring of 1916 there was even a period when it was forbidden to purchase such articles abroad (this was done to prevent the decline of the exchange of the ruble).

Although the prisoners were in great need of reading matter, only schoolbooks might be sent to them, and even these only if published previous to 1912. No such books, however, were to be found in the market, and as for collecting second-hand books, this would have

been useless, as the enemy authorities admitted only new books having no marks or stains. All these restrictions naturally proved a great hindrance to relief work and the general disorganization of the postal and transport services was a further impediment.

Considerable material assistance was given to the Russian prisoners of war by the organizations which were opened in Berne, Copenhagen, Stockholm, The Hague, Paris, and London. All of them were working in close contact with the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns and to some extent with the direct coöperation of the latter's representatives. Nevertheless, we must admit that the relief afforded was insignificant in comparison with the need. The total number of Russian prisoners of war was never exactly known. The official German and Austrian returns and those of the Russian General Staff differ to such an extent that it is impossible even at this late date to reconcile them. In the opinion of well-informed persons, there should have been at least 2,000,000 Russian prisoners in the enemies' hands. In Germany, as well as in Austria, this vast army of prisoners suffered constant hunger, as the inhabitants of those countries were themselves suffering from undernourishment. Diseases raged in the camps of the Russian prisoners, and according to official reports the mortality among the Russians was higher than among the prisoners of other nationalities, exceeding 7 per cent.[7]

Measures against Poison Gas.

Poison gas was employed by the Germans on the Russian front for the first time in May, 1915. This unfamiliar method of warfare created consternation throughout Russia. Various organizations for the study of the problems of chemical warfare came into existence almost simultaneously and were sponsored by the Ministry of War, the Red Cross, and the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. A research laboratory was established at Moscow by the Union of Zemstvos and rapidly became the center of the anti-gas campaign.

The first steps were but helpless attempts to find some kind of protection from the new weapon. Only gradually after much delay and thanks to experiments conducted with animals, was it found

[7] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 30-31, pp. 81-88; Nos. 35-36, pp. 99-105; Nos. 52-53, pp. 180-186. Also *Kratki Obzor Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*), pp. 65-66; and *Trudi* (*Report*) of the Committee for the Investigation of the Effects on Public Health of the War of 1914-1920, pp. 147-149, 157-177.

possible to discover the nature of the gas used by the Germans and to gain a fair knowledge of the symptoms and progress of the poisoning. The experts of the Zemstvo Union finally produced a gas mask of a type[8] which was recognized by a conference of experts as the most suitable one and was officially adopted. The production of gas masks was started all over the country, but it was soon found that the skill and precision required for their successful manufacture made it necessary to concentrate the work in Moscow. Consequently, a special workshop was opened under the auspices of the Central Committee of the Union and equipped with 270 sewing machines. Its daily output was about 20,000 masks and the total produced by the Union was 4,200,000 masks supplied direct to the army and 2,757,000 parts of masks on orders received from the Red Cross. There were also 467,000 gas masks for horses produced at this shop.

Although the gas masks were being constantly improved, it was found in the autumn of 1915 that the type adopted by the Union was not very effective except in case of chlorine gas. At the same time, as the Allies became better acquainted with the problem of chemical warfare, it was discovered that the Germans had a large assortment of poison gas. This fact came to light as early as August, 1915, and the Zemstvo Union decided to organize the production of dry gas masks. A number of experiments were carried out, to ascertain the most suitable design. At Petrograd, however, the new proposals of the Union, involving additional expenditure and the substitution of new masks for those already in use, were unfavorably received, and it became therefore necessary to start a regular campaign in the press and by public lectures, and by causing unofficial organizations and learned societies to make representations to the Government.

Not until April, 1916, could the authorities at Petrograd be induced to accept the views of the Union. The proposed gas mask of the Zelinsky-Kummandt type was approved by the higher military authorities and it became possible to begin its wholesale production. This gas mask consisted of a tin box filled with carbon prepared by a special process and connected with a rubber face mask with eyeglasses. The greatest difficulty was found in producing suitable

[8] The so-called "wet type" of gas mask, made of gauze with attached eyeglasses.

carbon, and the Union was compelled to recruit a large staff of skilled technicians to prepare a sufficient quantity of this substance. The manufacture of the tin boxes was in part carried out at a specially constructed zemstvo factory and in part assigned to contractors. The reception of the separate parts of the masks and the assembling of the masks themselves likewise required a large number of trained employees and a great deal of floor space. A whole block of hutments was built for this purpose on the outskirts of Moscow. Over 2,000 men and women were employed in the work of assembling the gas masks and their daily output was estimated at 25,000 gas masks. Up to May 20, 1917, the Union sent to the front about 3,500,000 gas masks of the new type valued at some 15,000,000 rubles.

The task of the Union did not end with the dispatch of the gas masks to the army. It was soon observed that the soldiers did not know, at the critical moment, how to make prompt use of the new gas masks and did not fully realize their importance. The Union therefore opened at Moscow a school where the purpose and use of gas masks were taught. The military units located around Moscow detailed officers and men to receive instruction, and these trained others to act as instructors to the units in the field. In the military district of Moscow anti-gas training soon bore excellent fruit, so that after July no troops were sent to the front from that district without having received proper anti-gas training and without practical experience of going through poison gas with their masks on.

Much more difficult was the task of providing anti-gas instruction at the front. For a considerable time the higher military authorities were unable to see any urgent necessity for the zemstvo anti-gas instructors at the front. It was only after the appearance of the first anti-gas units which found difficulty in obtaining permission to begin their work in the army that the military authorities changed their view. The zemstvo anti-gas units worked on a single plan prepared by Moscow. Each unit consisted of nine chemists with a considerable staff of assistants and transport facilities. They carried with them laboratory equipment, in sections that could be quickly assembled, besides a supply of gas, gas masks, and remedies for gas poisoning. On their arrival at their destination at the front, the anti-gas unit would proceed to erect a chamber, fill it with gas, demonstrate to the troops the effects of gas on animals, instruct

them in the most efficient methods of using the gas mask, and enable the men to pass through the gas-filled chamber with their masks on. The demonstration was accompanied by lectures and the distribution of popular literature on the subject. Having completed its demonstration in one place, the detachment would pack up and proceed to another. In this manner several million soldiers received instruction in the proper use of gas masks.[9]

The Finance and Audit Departments.

During the initial period of its work the Union of Zemstvos saw no necessity to alter the customary method of the zemstvo institutions in the disbursement of funds. Under this, the transactions of the executive organs were controlled by an audit committee elected by the zemstvo assembly. In one respect, it is true, the operations of the Union at first differed greatly from what had been customary. The zemstvos had been in the habit of working on the basis of a yearly budget prepared in advance; the budget was examined and approved once a year by the zemstvo assembly in a manner prescribed by law. At the beginning of the War, however, it was inconceivable that estimates should be prepared in advance for any great length of time for everything was in a state of uncertainty and not even the immediate future could be foreseen. In the chaos naturally attending the first developments, particularly at the front, the question of expenditure was relegated to the background, and gave place to the all-absorbing effort to help the army immediately and regardless of cost. The situation became somewhat more delicate, however, when the Zemstvo Union began to receive considerable funds from the State Treasury.

These funds came from several sources. The principal were, (1) the Military Fund, consisting of special sums placed at the disposal of military officials having charge of supplies at the front, to be used for unforeseen needs arising in the cause of military operation; (2) a committee at Petrograd, whose duty it was to assign funds for what may be termed the normal war-time requirements. As has already been explained, the committee demanded of the Union to present in each separate case an order from the military authorities at the front, and an estimate. Accordingly estimates were

[9] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 37-38, pp. 46-47, 290; No. 39, pp. 33-35; Nos. 64-66, pp. 40-44; also *Kratki Obzor Deyatelnosti* (*Outline*), pp. 55-56.

prepared and submitted to the committee. Owing to lack of experience, however, it was only natural that the estimates should fall short of actual requirements, and changes therefore had to be made even while the orders were being executed. The actual expenditure incurred by the committees of the front differed greatly from the figures set down in the estimates, yet the uncertain position of the Zemstvo Union, lacking a strict legal status under the law, made it imperative that its leaders should act with more than usual circumspection and caution. The Government merely tolerated the Union as a necessary evil. The enormous amount of work accomplished by the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns in organizing the active elements of the population was looked upon by the Ministry of the Interior as a conspiracy directed against the Government.

Public sympathy was with the unions, however, and this helps to explain in part the failure of practically every measure adopted by the Government to duplicate their work, such as the relief of refugees and of the disabled, and similar efforts. It was anticipated that, as soon as the War was over, the Government, embittered by the failure of its measures in this direction, would certainly take vengeance on the most popular public leaders. The Mayor of Moscow, M. Chelnokov, who acted as the high commissioner of the Union of Towns, was right when he told the government officials on one of the commissions:

> Today you are calling upon us, asking us to help you, and you are readily granting us the funds. But presently you will cease to give us money as readily as you are doing now, and then you will begin to refuse it to us. A little later, again, you will commence to obstruct us and to fight against us. The end will be that you will do that which you have always been doing to public organizations, that is to say, you will attempt to drag them into court. We have been through nearly all these stages already, and there remains only the last.[10]

The most convenient excuse that the bureaucracy would find for bringing public leaders into court would be to accuse them of misusing the funds allotted by the Government and, in particular, to allege that the actual expenditure exceeded the estimates approved by the authorities.

To avoid the possibility of conflicts on such grounds, the Central Committee of the Union endeavored to place the audit of expendi-

[10] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Zamgov, Nos. 18-19, p. 23.

ture upon a solid foundation and to enlist the aid of the State Audit Department. On familiarizing themselves with the details of the work, the representatives of the Audit Department ought to be able to appreciate the difficulties confronting the Union and to defend it afterward, should any fault be found by the higher authorities. Fortunately, the representatives of the Audit Department lived up to the expectations. After two examinations of the accounts, made without previous notice, the Auditor General officially admitted that the bookkeeping of the central institutions of the Zemstvo Union was faultless. He also appointed one of the higher officials of his department to represent him permanently on the Central Committee of the Union and to direct its accounting in such a way as to prevent in future any possible misunderstanding with the Government on purely formal grounds.

With the aid of this official representative of the Government, a thorough and systematic reorganization of the accounting of the Union and of its various departments was carried out during the second half of the War. The need for such a reorganization had been felt for some time. With a monthly budget of, at first, 6,000,000 rubles, rising afterward to 20,000,000 and finally 60,000,000 rubles, it was indispensable to elaborate a uniform system of accounting and disbursements, to be obligatory for all the institutions of the Union. Even from the point of view of mere economy, the huge organization of the Union seemed to require a regular system and stringent rules. We have seen that in the matter of supply it had been necessary to adopt a very strict and careful budgetary system. At first the estimates were prepared for periods of three months, and later twice a year. The methods of preparing the estimates and the system of bookkeeping and accounting adopted independently by the various institutions were very diverse, and the central organs found it necessary to undertake the difficult and tedious task of reducing them to some uniform plan. They, moreover, had to induce all the local institutions to adopt the same methods. The effort to bring about the voluntary surrender of unrestricted freedom which had prevailed during the first stage of the Union's work proved to be the most difficult in the life of the Union. Demands presented by headquarters in too rigorous and urgent a form, especially when containing a taint of that government routine which was so cordially detested by most zemstvo workers, might have paralyzed

the energy of the local officers of the Union and dampened that enthusiasm which inspired them to face all the dangers of the front and even risk their lives. Fortunately for the success of the whole enterprise, there were men at the head who thoroughly understood the mentality of the local workers. They approached the solution of the problem with persistence coupled with tact and consideration. They were also able to induce the agents of the State Audit Department attached to the Union to act in the same spirit. The result was a gradual transformation of the methods of the Union's budgeting and accounting.

At the close of 1916 the Central Committee of the Union had a financial department, a statistical department, an audit department, and a financial council. The financial department, created on June 30, 1916, supervised the bookkeeping and accounting in all the organs of the Union, prepared reports concerning the work of the Central Committee and of the Union as a whole, and concentrated under its control the budgets of all the institutions of the Union, preparing accordingly the budget for the whole Union. The statistical department was engaged in statistical computations, such as, for instance, the cost of one day's treatment of a patient in a hospital or a hospital train, or the cost of a bath, or of the daily food ration of a trench worker, and so on. The audit department, to which the representatives of the State Audit Department were attached, not only examined the accounts submitted, but also made preliminary examinations of each pay document, and no disbursement, in the ordinary routine, could be made without written authority. It was also empowered to inspect all the institutions of the Union and not only to examine the regularity of expenditure and the correctness of the vouchers, but also to investigate the propriety and economic justification of the expenditure incurred. For the coordination of the departments that in one way or another had to deal with the financial operations of the Union, there was established the financial council, to which all financial matters were submitted for preliminary discussion.

The routine of the work was as follows. Estimates were presented by the provincial committees and committees of the front and by all the departments and executive organs of the Central Committee for ordinary and extraordinary expenditure to be incurred during a given period. These estimates after examination by the financial

department and financial council, would be submitted to the Central Committee for approval. On the basis of these estimates the financial department would then issue orders for payments, and it would see to it that disbursements were kept within the limits of the estimates.

At every committee of the front an audit department was organized which included representatives of the State Audit Department. These departments were a replica on a smaller scale of the Central Committee's audit department, enjoying the same rights and performing the same functions, and subject to its control. Similar audit departments were attached to the headquarters of the smaller subdivisions of the unions and were placed under the control of the audit department of the front. In carrying out the reform, the chief difficulty was found to be the reconstruction of the existing system of accounting on a uniform basis. To bring about better understanding a number of conferences were held of accountants from the institutions of the Union. A body of instructors in bookkeeping was also created; they visited the institutions of the Union and solved any problem that arose in the course of practical work.

On June 14, 1916, the Council of Ministers deliberated on the question of the methods of audit adopted by the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns in respect of funds allotted by the Government. The Auditor General suggested that the audit of the unions should not be subjected to the rigors of the routine usually required by his department and that an interdepartmental committee should be formed instead and should be empowered to exercise control as it sees fit, taking into account the abnormal conditions under which the Unions had to work. This proposal was accepted by the Council of Ministers and on July 10 of the same year a committee was appointed on these lines and endowed with extraordinary powers, entitling it to inspect not only the accounts and documents of the unions, but even their institutions themselves.

These measures helped in a considerable degree to remove the danger to which M. Chelnokov had alluded. At the same time, they could not but greatly complicate the work of the Union, and, while rendering it more regular and systematic, they somewhat damped the ardor which the unions ought to have shown in working for the needs of the army.

The Legal Problem.

The question of legalizing the Zemstvo Union did not arise in practice for a long time. The Union had come into existence without anybody's permission, as a temporary organization in connection with the needs of the War. In the opinion of the authorities, an opinion which had behind it the weight of historical tradition, the zemstvos should have been permitted to provide for the needs of the local residents only. All that the law authorized the zemstvos to do was to combine among themselves for the purpose of satisfying more effectively by joint action these purely local needs (for instance by the reinsurance union, the union for the purchase of iron, and so on).

The All-Russian Union of Zemstvos constituted for an altogether different object of a national character, obviously did not fall within these narrow definitions. The Union existed without a statute sanctioned by the legislative power. An ordinance of the Minister of the Interior instructed the provincial governors to place no obstacles in the way of a discussion by zemstvo assemblies of problems connected with the working of the Zemstvo Union and to refrain from protesting against the assignment of funds to the treasury of the Union. This was well enough. But the trouble was that another ordinance from the same Minister might at any moment arbitrarily change this situation. Given the mutual relations of the Union and the Ministry of the Interior, one might have thought that the Union would have taken every possible measure to place itself upon a strictly legal basis, and under normal conditions only such a basis could have assured it safe and unmolested existence, free from any risk of arbitrary action by the Minister. In Russia, however, practice differed greatly from such theory, and if the Union was able to win the right to exist at all, it was only thanks to its actual performances. Whether the bureaucracy liked it or not, it had to reconcile itself to the existence of the Union, and not only was it powerless to change the situation, but in many instances it was even forced to seek the help of the Union and to assign to it hundreds of millions of rubles from the Treasury.

In these circumstances the vague legal status of the Union was bound to have some very useful aspects. After all, what was there that the Union could possibly gain by legislation? Nothing more

than the rights with which the zemstvos were already endowed. And yet, in spite of these rights, the zemstvos were groaning under the vigilance of the provincial governors. We have seen already that special organs of the Union were often formed for the express purpose of safeguarding for the officers of the Union that freedom of action which was denied to the legally authorized zemstvo boards. It seemed idle to hope to obtain by legislative action that freedom which the local organs of the Union were so much in need of, and at the same time it had to be borne in mind that legislative regulation of the functions of the Union along lines approved by the bureaucracy might even go so far as to render all fruitful work impossible. To be sure, the Union was already beginning at the close of the second year of the War to take into consideration possible post-war conditions, and whilst establishing the institutions made necessary by the War, was striving, as were also separate zemstvos, so to organize them that they should meet the general needs not only during the War but after it. The officers of the Union felt absolutely certain that it would continue its work after the War; but they realized only too well the futility of hoping for legislative sanction for such institutions at that particular moment.

As work progressed, however, the unlegalized existence of the Union gave rise to ever increasing troubles. Lacking those legal powers which would have enabled it to conclude legally binding contracts, the Union was confronted with numerous difficulties in its commercial and general business transactions. These had all to be entered into in the name of individual zemstvos, which frequently resulted in a loss of time and money.

Having carefully considered the abnormal situation, the Committee of the Union in March, 1916, at last decided to take steps to legalize the Union. A bill to this effect was examined by a conference of delegates of provincial zemstvos on March 12-14, 1916. It carefully avoided raising "dangerous" questions, such as that of the legal character of the Union, of the relations to be established between its several organs and the Government, etc. It was drafted on the assumption that the Union was merely a temporary organization created to meet the necessities and possible consequences of the War. It sanctioned, moreover, as it were, that internal machinery of the Union which had been evolved in practice, merely adding a chapter borrowed from the law governing the zemstvos, which gave the Un-

ion "the right to acquire and dispose of property, sign contracts, assume obligations, bring civil proceedings, and appear in court in matters affecting the property of the Union" (article 4).

These modest demands were wholeheartedly supported by the representatives of the zemstvos, but the Government strongly objected to it. Only after the Revolution, on June 7, 1917, did the Provisional Government legally confirm the "Statute concerning the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos," a statute, however, far more liberal in its scope. The new law embodied, in the first place, those permanent duties which the Union was expected to undertake after the War, and dealt only in second place with the needs arising out of the War.[11]

Conclusion.

We have described in the preceding pages the principal divisions of the Central Committee of the Union that were in operation during the second half of the War. The less important departments, however, as, for instance, the economic department were also steadily expanding their activities. It has naturally been impossible to give here anything like an exhaustive description of the numerous activities of the Union in all their aspects and manifestations. We have said nothing, or practically nothing, of the publishing, educational, and legal work done by the Union. Mention has been made of the purchase of supplies for the needs of the zemstvo hospitals. Similar measures were taken for the purpose of supplying the zemstvo schools with paper, writing materials, and textbooks, and the Union established a contact with the most important firms in Russia and Finland. The Union went so far as to buy one of the largest printing plants in Moscow, in order to be able to carry on this work efficiently. We have had no opportunity of discussing the work accomplished by the learned commission sent by the Union to the al-

[11] Article 1 of the law of June 1, 1917, reads: "The All-Russian Zemstvo Union, being a united organization of zemstvo institutions, carries into effect those measures which are called for by (1) the needs and duties of a general nature and (2) by the war and its consequences. NOTE: The All-Russian Zemstvo Union may also establish manufacturing, commercial, and credit enterprises, open schools (higher, secondary, and primary) and institutions of social welfare, extend to them its coöperation, and publish and distribute printed matter." See *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*), Nos. 35-36, pp. 33-37, 109-111.

lied countries for the purpose of acquainting itself with the organization of their army medical services.

In the second half of 1916 the Zemstvo Union had grown to such an extent as to constitute a veritable state within a state. Its annual budget had risen to the huge sum of 600,000,000 rubles and was growing uninterruptedly. Hundreds of thousands of persons, women as well as men, drawn from all paths of life, were employed directly and indirectly in the service of the Union. Donations were constantly flowing into its treasury. Gifts and parcels for the troops were being received in such quantities that they had to be sent to the front by special trains in charge of special commissioners. While it cannot be said that cash donations played any considerable part in the enormous budget of the Union, it should be noted that these small gifts and contributions in cash came from every part of the country and all classes of the population, thus demonstrating the confidence that the Union enjoyed. Of course, there were instances now and then of important gifts. Thus one donor, who preferred to remain anonymous, presented the Union with a splendid estate covering about 3,500 deciatines in the rich black soil belt of south Russia, in the district of Epiphan, province of Tula, on condition that the Union should open in this estate elementary, secondary, and higher agricultural schools for the instruction of peasant children. The estate included arable land, meadows on the Don River, forests and coal mines, and its market price was about 1,000,000 rubles. A gift of this kind testified not only to a great deal of confidence in the Union, but also to the conviction of the donor that the Union would exist for many years after the War—a conviction shared by the public throughout Russia.

CHAPTER XIII

THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE UNIONS OF ZEMSTVOS AND OF TOWNS FOR THE SUPPLY OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND MUNITIONS

Origins.

The joint committee of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns was known in Russia by its abbreviated designation of "Zemgor," a combination of the two first syllables of the words zemstvo and *gorod* (*gorod* meaning town). The origin of the committee, as has been noted previously, dates from the time when the defeats suffered by the Russian troops in Galicia and Poland "opened everybody's eyes to the inadequacy of the technical equipment of the Russian army. The whole nation was thereupon inspired with desire to come to the aid of the army, which was suffering defeat because of the lack of shells and other munitions . . . the public clamor for the reorganization of supply became irresistible and the Government had to make concessions."[1]

On May 26, 1915, the ninth congress of representatives of commerce and industry met at Petrograd. Laying aside all professional interests, this body expressed itself emphatically in favor of an immediate mobilization of Russian industry and of its adaptation to war needs. This decision took concrete form in the organization of the so-called war industries committees. In addition to the merchants and manufacturers, scientists and experts were enlisted in the work of these committees, besides representatives of railways and steamship companies, of labor and of the two unions. A joint meeting of the Central Committee of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns sent its greetings to the permanent council of the congress of commerce and industry, welcoming its decision. It also resolved to summon on June 5 meetings to be held simultaneously by representatives of zemstvos and towns for the purpose of discussing the problems of military supplies. Both these meetings frankly told the Government many bitter truths, but they recognized at the same time the abso-

[1] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Zemgor, No. 1, p. 5.

lute necessity of uniting all the forces of the nation for the defense of the country. It was decided that the zemstvos and municipalities should work for the supply of the army under the general guidance of the central committees of the two unions. These committees, acting in close collaboration, were to establish close contact with the associations of commerce and industry, the coöperative societies and professional organizations that were supplying the needs of the army. Special technical departments were established under the central committees of the two unions, and the coöperation of eminent specialists was assured. Inquiries were then addressed to the zemstvos and municipalities regarding the articles of military equipment which they might be able to produce. At Petrograd, the Ministry of War supplied lists of articles required by the army, as well as the necessary samples, and made advance payments. When entrusting orders to the Zemstvo Union, the Ministry of War gave expression to its "absolute confidence that the contemplated activity of the Union in supplying the army will yield the same beneficial results that have been shown throughout by its efforts to relieve the sick and wounded soldiers and to execute large orders for the Army Supply Department."

At first each union worked independently. Soon, however, the work of the two unions and the work that was being done by the war industries committees began to overlap. At headquarters there was a scarcity of efficient experts, and there was danger of a rivalry and duplication of effort that might prove fatal to the whole enterprise. The two unions therefore decided to combine their work for the supply of the army, and on July 10, 1915, the "Committee of the All-Russian Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns for the Supply of the Army," or, as it was commonly known, the Zemgor, came into operation.

Organization.

The membership of the Central Committee of the Zemgor included the high commissioners of the two unions and four representatives of each union appointed by the respective central committees. The chairmanship was left to the high commissioners, to be determined by agreement. A deputy chairman was also appointed by each of the two unions. The Central Committee of the Zemgor was charged with the general direction of the work. It received the

orders from the Government and allocated them among the zemstvos and municipalities; it also received the articles provided on the various orders and delivered them to the Ministry of War. Another function was to administer all funds furnished by the Government for supplies. It also had to arrange, when necessary, for the construction of factories and works. In addition to the usual executive machinery, departments of the Central Committee of the Zemgor were created to deal with the following matters: military-technical, orders, raw materials, production, communications and transport, and munitions. The largest of these departments was the military-technical, which was subdivided into the following sections: shells, armaments, trench instruments, electro-technical, chemical, automobiles, and technical information. This department also maintained a permanent exhibition of samples, besides a drawing office.

Following the example of the Zemstvo Union, provincial and district committees of the Zemgor were established, having among their members scientists and experts, representatives of merchants, manufacturers, and of other groups. The membership was not definitely prescribed, but varied according to local conditions. The provincial committee functioned as the directing and coördinating organ for the district committees. It received orders from the central committees, allocated them among the districts, made advance payments on such orders to the district committees, supervised the prompt execution of the orders, and assumed general responsibility for them.

The Central Committee of the Zemgor had four principal functions: (1) It placed the orders of the Ministry of War and assisted in their execution. (2) It assisted in the evacuation of industrial establishments from areas threatened by enemy invasion. (3) It organized factories and other industrial enterprises. (4) It supplied the needs of the front directly.

Army Orders.

Orders had to be distributed with due consideration to technical possibilities in each locality and with a view to the greatest possible economy. Economy, however, could not always be attained, since the urgency of orders often made it necessary to place them, not where they might be executed on the most favorable terms, but wherever they could be executed promptly, even though at a much higher

cost. Orders for separate parts of shells were allocated to a large number of plants in such a manner that the product of each successive operation was handed over by a smaller to a larger establishment, one of the latter dealing with the final assemblage of all the parts and the production of the finished shell (this was usually done in factories especially constructed for the purpose). Moreover, local committees often hastened to erect their own munition factories, buying or leasing suitable works already in existence and adapting them for this purpose. Machinery and other equipment were imported from the allied countries under the supervision of special commissions sent to those countries.

During the first eight months of its operations the Zemgor accepted and allocated orders from the Ministry of War to the value of nearly 85,000,000 rubles. These orders were received in a haphazard fashion, sometimes from the Ministry of War and sometimes from separate army units direct. Most of them were urgent.

In the course of these transactions with the Government, it became evident that the Ministry of War had nothing approaching a precise idea of the requirements of the army. Orders hastily issued would be apportioned by the Central Committee of the Zemgor among the local committees of the two unions, as well as among private contractors and firms. Over one hundred committees of the Zemgor had accepted, up to March, 1916, orders valued at 70,000,000 rubles, or 82.6 per cent of the total of the orders given to the Zemgor. Most of these orders came from the Army Supply Department, which required equipment to the value of nearly 41,500,000 rubles (48.9 per cent). Next came the Army Technical Board, which required material to the value of 19,500,000 rubles (23 per cent), and the Principal Artillery Board, which gave orders to the value of 17,000,000 rubles (20 per cent).

All orders were received at the so-called "limit prices," that is, prices which used formerly to be paid by the Ministry of War. The Central Committee of the Zemgor succeeded, however, in placing them at much lower prices and thereby saved the Government about 25 per cent of the cost.

The hasty mobilization of industry presented exceptional difficulties. Time was needed to build factories, to adapt existing works, and to import machinery and tools from abroad. Leaving the large industrial establishments to the Government and the war industries

committees, the Zemgor turned its attention to the medium-sized and small industrial establishments and to the rural craftsmen, organizing them in guilds (*artels*) under its local committees and making extensive use of the numerous peasant coöperative societies. It was, however, not easy to achieve such an organization at a moment's notice, and to train the workers in new methods of production of unfamiliar articles. Apart from these natural obstacles, the Zemgor had also to reckon with the generally unfavorable situation created in the country by the protraction of the War.

The local committees [wrote the official publication of the Zemgor] began their work on army supplies at a moment when everything had disappeared from the market or had become so expensive that the result was the same as if they had disappeared. The supply of the local committees with raw materials was hindered by two almost insuperable difficulties. In the first place, the producers of raw materials found it impossible to execute all their orders promptly and had to accept them on increasingly long terms of delivery, stipulating as long as six months for the completion. The second difficulty was the disorganization of transport, which made it impossible to deliver the materials when ready to the committees.[2]

The complaints about transport facilities were particularly frequent. The Zemgor's consignments were not regarded as "military," which might have secured them the necessary rolling stock with less delay. Applications of the Central Committee for permission to load goods without waiting for the ordinary freight schedule remained unattended to for months. The delays in the goods traffic at times became almost incredible. Thus, we find instances in the official documents of iron loaded at the station of Taganrog not arriving at Kazan until three months later. Owing to the congestion of traffic at important junction points, cars destined for these points often found themselves dispatched to other places, in which case it would be extremely difficult to trace the misdirected cars, loaded with raw materials urgently needed for the manufacture of indispensable army equipment. In consequence of the general chaos that reigned on the railways, abuses and corruption were rampant.

To cope with the difficulties, a special department of transport

[2] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Zemgor, Nos. 15-16, p. 57.

was created by the Central Committee of the Zemgor. Its agents, stationed at the most important points along the railways, would establish contact with the local railway officials, take measures to obtain the necessary rolling stock, see to it that raw materials and finished products were loaded promptly, and send some subordinate member of the staff to accompany such consignments. These agents very soon developed much ability and resource, learning every detail of the methods and ways of the railway men. They kept a close watch on the cars entrusted to their care, seeing to it that they were not detached from the train at some out-of-the-way station—a thing which used frequently to be done under cover of darkness—and even though they sometimes failed to obtain safe delivery at destination, they knew at least where to look for the lost consignment.

The difficult task of finding the raw material and fuel required for production was left to the care of the materials department of the Zemgor. Thanks to the efforts of this department, raw materials worth about 16,000,000 rubles were purchased up to January 1, 1916, and all factories working on orders of the Zemgor were able to obtain a sufficient supply of raw materials and fuel. A serious obstacle to the prompt execution of orders was found in the great shortage of local labor. This could only be dealt with by means of incessant requests for the return of mobilized skilled workers to their places of residence. Many of these requests remained unheeded. Considerable harm was also done by the growing competition and rivalry between the Zemgor and the Ministry of War. To such extremes did this rivalry go that the Government would sometimes requisition raw materials that had been bought by the Zemgor, and in some cases the Ministry of War, by raising the prices of its orders above the "limit prices," would make it impossible to place the orders allotted to the Zemgor, as the latter was not in a position to exceed the prescribed prices.[3]

Gradually, however, all these obstacles were overcome by the Zemgor, and by the end of 1915 it was in a position to commence deliveries of finished articles of military equipment. On March 1, 1916, the total value of orders filled and completed was 15,650,195 rubles. From this date onward the execution of orders proceeded at an increasingly rapid pace.

[3] *Ibid.*, Nos. 15-16, p. 5.

Evacuation of Industrial Establishments from Localities Threatened by the Enemy.

The Zemgor proposed to introduce some order and regularity of industry into the process of the evacuation for it was being carried out without system and was causing untold harm to the evacuated works. Through its representatives in the government commission in charge of evacuation, the Zemgor proposed that a definite system of recording and unloading evacuated machinery and material should be set up. With the aid of a special staff, the Zemgor compiled careful lists and took charge of the unloading of machinery and other equipment arriving in the interior of the country. For consignments of which it was impossible to ascertain the ownership, it erected a special assembling factory where such equipment was repaired and generally made serviceable. It would then hand over the equipment to the establishments working for national defense.

Inquiries by the agents of the Zemgor established the fact that some of the most valuable consignments, including expensive machinery which could not be bought in Russia at any price, would often be scattered over a number of railway stations, sometimes at the most remote places, where they would be unloaded and abandoned, without care or supervision. This led the Zemgor to take a more active part in the evacuation of industrial plants. On the one hand it was necessary to persuade the Government to introduce some system and order into the process and to assist it in its efforts in this direction. On the other hand everything possible had to be done to enable evacuated establishments to resume their interrupted operations without avoidable delay or friction in the interior of the country.

With this object in view, the Zemgor, through its local agents collected information concerning factory premises that could be bought or leased. It inspected these premises and went so far as to consider the possibility of either buying or leasing sites in different towns that might be suitable for the erection of factory buildings. It also collected information with regard to machinery and equipment that was offered for sale. All such information was concentrated at Moscow and placed at the disposal of the Zemgor's contractors working for the national defense and of the owners or managers of evacuated establishments.

The hurried evacuation of Riga in consequence of the rapid advance of the enemy toward that city is a typical example of the work of the Zemgor in this domain.

The evacuation of the industrial plants of Riga was naturally suggested immediately after the occupation of Libau by the Germans. The idea, however, found little support among the local manufacturers and among the highest military and civil authorities, and at one of the conferences held at that time in Riga it was decided that such a measure would be "simply impossible." The Germans were expected to capture Riga about the middle of July; yet the officer commanding the city thought it necessary as late as June 17 to issue an order prohibiting the dispatch of any freights from Riga, with the exception of finished products and factory equipment not required for work then in progress. Such was the view held in the circles which were maintaining close relations with the German industrialists of Riga. As for Petrograd, the authorities there looked upon Riga and its industry as already doomed. The Army Technical Board sent an invitation to the owners of factories engaged on work for national defense, asking them to send representatives to Riga in order to select equipment from local factories which they might need for their own plants. The representatives soon arrived in Riga and thereupon numerous commissions were sent into the factories. Although these were working at full pressure, the commissions, taking a fancy to this or that piece of machinery or equipment, would put their seal on it, with the result that production was soon in a hopeless state of chaos.

The Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns decided to intervene. Their representatives submitted to the Minister of Commerce and Industry a memorandum in which his attention was called to the necessity of conducting the evacuation of Riga in an orderly and systematic fashion. The memorandum urged that the factories of Riga should be transferred to the interior of the country as integral units, together with their technical staffs and workers, in order that production might be resumed at the new places. The recommendations contained in the memorandum were vigorously upheld before the higher military authorities by the heads of the two unions, Prince Lvov and M. Chelnokov, who succeeded in obtaining the appointment of a special commission empowered to supervise the speedy evacuation of Riga. This commission was vested with ex-

traordinary powers. It consisted of three generals and five representatives of the unions, and on July 6 it began its work. Although absolute unanimity prevailed among the members of the commission, the officer commanding the city placed many needless, vexatious, and simply ridiculous obstacles in their way, while his petty bureaucratic methods greatly hampered its labors. Still worse were the difficulties in dealing with the Riga State Railway. Instead of cooperation and help, the commission found there an atmosphere of peevishness, in addition to the habitual carelessness and irregularity in the work of the officials of this railway. The commission appealed to Petrograd, but even though high officials of the Ministry of Transport came down to Riga to investigate the complaints, there was only a slight improvement in the situation.

In Riga, one of the most important industrial centers of the Empire, an immense quantity of highly valuable materials and manufactured goods had been accumulated. Many factories had in stock thousands of tons of copper, steel, lead, tin, and other metals. The work of the commission was of a highly responsible and delicate nature, since, in spite of its intention to evacuate industrial plants as integral units, the commission found itself compelled to break them up to a considerable extent, lest materials of great value for the production of military equipment should fall into the hands of the enemy. Fortunately, the German offensive was delayed, so that the commission was able to complete its labor at the beginning of September, by which time most of the valuable equipment was evacuated.

The total number of establishments evacuated from Riga was about 150. Some of these represented comparatively small factories and their plant could be loaded on ten or twelve railway cars. There were also, however, large works which required in each case more than 1,000 cars for the transport of their plant alone. On the whole, it may safely be estimated that nearly 30,000 railway carloads of plant and about 3,000 carloads of working men were evacuated between July 6 and September 6 from Riga. The executive functions in the evacuation of the city were performed chiefly by the officials of the two unions, for the army generals had at their disposal only a very small staff, not more than some three or four officers. The number of engineers, students, and other trained and intelligent workers

dispatched from Moscow to Riga to assist in the evacuation was about sixty.[4]

The Zemgor's Own Industrial Undertakings.

Stores and equipment evacuated from the front could not always be properly utilized. The Government remained satisfied with saving the machinery, equipment, and raw materials from capture by the enemy, and then these stores would perhaps become mere useless encumbrances. They occupied rolling stock that was urgently needed for other purposes and the Government was only too glad to get rid of them.

Entirely different was the attitude taken in this matter by the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns, as has been shown in the preceding pages. Their view regarding the evacuations from localities threatened by the enemy was that industries working for the needs of the War must be enabled to continue operations. This is why the assistance already described was rendered by the Zemgor to the owners of evacuated establishments. In those cases, however, where owners showed themselves disinclined to resume work in new places, the Zemgor tried to purchase their plants and set them to work with its own resources. It thus happened that factories and other industrial works were often established which had no direct relation to the supply of the army. At first, these establishments produced only for the general market, but gradually they were adapted to manufacture products required by the army. In this way there came into existence fifty different factories and other industrial undertakings owned by the Zemgor. The following is a brief description of a few of these establishments.

The needle factory. This factory had been owned by a German firm in Riga and was requisitioned and evacuated to Moscow with all its workers and part of the administration. At first the factory continued to produce needles, turning out 8,000,000 to 10,000,000 a month. These needles were sold to the zemstvos, coöperative societies, and so on. At the same time the factory undertook the production of a type of needles that used to be imported exclusively

[4] The foregoing description of the evacuation of Riga follows almost literally, but with considerable omissions, the text of a report submitted by N. N. Kovalevsky, a member of the Zemgor Central Committee; see *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Zemgor, Nos. 2-3, pp. 58-64.

from England. Although it produced nearly four millions of these needles a month, it was by no means able to satisfy the demand of the market. The factory also began the manufacture of percussion pins for hand grenades and of a special type of pins of which the linen mills were experiencing a great scarcity.

The hosiery and knitting factory. This factory, likewise, had been requisitioned at Riga, evacuated to Moscow, and finally placed at the disposal of the Zemgor. Two carloads of its equipment were utterly lost on the way, so that it proved impossible to set it to work again until January, 1916. It produced socks, shirts, drawers, and similar articles for the army, turning out about 1,500,000 pieces a year, at prices 30 per cent lower than those ruling in the market.

The spinning mill. This mill, which used to produce yarn for sacking material, was also reorganized after evacuation. Beginning at first with the manufacture of cotton yarn, the plant was very soon adapted to the production of linen thread.

A far more active share in the supply of the army was taken by those factories and works which the Zemgor itself established. As it was almost impossible, however, to find in Russia the necessary machinery and equipment, and it had to be ordered abroad, requiring many months for delivery, the construction of such works proceeded much more slowly. Thus, for instance, a large munition factory belonging to the Zemgor, with an estimated daily capacity of 2,000 three-inch and 2,000 six-inch shells, was unable to begin operations until about Easter of 1916, and then only in part; it came into full operation only in the autumn, after all the necessary machinery had arrived from abroad.

The field-telephone factory. Toward the end of July, 1915, the Zemgor received from the Ministry of War an order for the delivery of 21,000 field telephones, and was itself expected to manufacture them. Suitable premises, although with inadequate mechanical equipment, were found for this purpose, and in September, when the machinery that had been wanting had at last been installed, the factory was ready to begin operations. During 1916, thousands of telephones were produced and repaired at this factory, together with spare parts, such as microphones, commutators, condensators, dry batteries, etc.; and thousands of miles of telephone wire were sent to the front. The factory employed about two hundred men and its output was increased to fifty telephones a day.

Engineering works. These works were equipped with machinery of the Dvinsk professional school which had been evacuated to Moscow. Special departments were established for lathe work, carpentry, ironwork, and a blacksmith shop. They produced gauges for machine guns, gun rifling machines, machines for the making of nails, and other articles. In addition to the regular work, these works finished about two hundred shell cases a day.

The gauge factory. This factory supplied with its products the factories and works engaged in the production of munitions and shells.

We may also mention the works organized by the Zemgor for the production of pyrometers, sulphuric and nitric acid, benzol, barbed wire, horseshoes, screws, and many other articles.

The list given above is far from being complete.

The Work of the Zemgor at the Front.

In the preceding pages, we have had occasion more than once to speak of the trench workers. The retreat of the Russian troops made it necessary to construct a complete network of trenches and other earthworks in the rear of the new front line. The army authorities had failed to obtain a sufficient number of volunteer workers and had therefore to requisition for this work the local population, men as well as women. Their efficiency was very low. Hundreds of thousands of men were digging lazily and leisurely, complaining of hunger and cold and lack of proper shelter, and cursing the authorities who had dragged them away from their personal affairs.

An attempt was made to enlist the services of the Zemstvo Union in organizing the food supply of these vast armies of labor, and very soon the Union was providing food for about 300,000 men scattered along the front. This, however, made only slight improvement in the situation. As soon as the cold weather set in, the trench workers, who often lacked warm clothing and proper shelter, began to desert, even at the risk of severe punishment. At times the army engineers in charge of the work themselves thought it necessary to give permission to groups of trench workers to return to their homes, seeing that it was impossible to make the conditions of their existence tolerable.

As always happened in hopeless situations, the authorities at the front now conceived the idea of appealing for help to the Unions of

Zemstvos and of Towns. At the beginning of September, the preliminary agreements having been successfully negotiated, the Zemgor obtained from the military authorities an official request to form eighty gangs of one thousand men each. Urgent orders were thereupon issued to the local committees of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns to assemble the necessary forces of diggers and carpenters. Feverish preparations were begun at Moscow to supply tools, warm clothing, and warm portable shelters. Engineers and skilled workmen familiar with the building industry were registered by the committees. On September 5 the Emperor gave his approval to the necessary legislation sanctioning the volunteer labor battalions. To facilitate the formation of these battalions, the military authorities at the front after some preliminary negotiations, agreed to allow considerable privileges in respect of liability for military service to the men registering for work in this force.

The news that this unprecedented duty had been entrusted to the Zemgor, however, produced in government circles in Petrograd the effect of a bombshell. Was it possible? they asked. Were these public bodies to be permitted to have an army of their own, equipped and organized under the command of zemstvo engineers? Those in favor of the new enterprise endeavored to allay these fears, to convince these nervous bureaucrats that, even if the unions did cherish evil designs, their "army" of 80,000 men, equipped with nothing more dangerous than axes and shovels, would be unable to do any harm with millions of troops in front of them. They failed, however, completely and the higher officials of the Government were seized with a truly comical panic. The result was that the Zemgor, on September 11, was suddenly ordered by Petrograd to cease at once the further recruiting of labor and to confine itself to one battalion of a thousand men, by way of experiment. Thus a vast measure, taken in hand with great enthusiasm over the whole of Russia had to be abandoned.

These facts, which today seem almost incredible, clearly illustrate the fear and distrust with which the higher circles of the Government regarded the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. They also reveal the conflicting views regarding those bodies held by the authorities at the front and at Petrograd—a conflict that made itself felt at every step in their activities.

In the meantime the first labor battalion organized by the Zemgor

had gone to work in the province of Mogilev. On September 29 the Chief Engineer, accompanied by a general specially assigned for this purpose by the Emperor, made a very careful examination of the work already accomplished by the battalion, and their report upon it was so enthusiastic that when the Emperor had read it, it was decided to revert to the original plan. The Zemgor received a proposal to organize at once six battalions of trench workers. A last attempt was now made by the higher authorities to eliminate the Zemgor's obnoxious "army," and orders were given that the Zemgor should send to the front only engineers with complete equipment and supplies for six battalions, but without the laborers. The work was to be organized only after the forcible conscription of local labor for the purpose. It was found, however, that these unwilling laborers, even though receiving wages, took exactly five times as long over their work as the diggers and carpenters who had been hired by the zemstvos on a voluntary agreement.

We need not go further into the details of the tragi-comical struggle in which the unions had to engage for the right to give the army the most effective assistance. We shall merely observe that, as time went on, it was found possible gradually to get the scheme working under normal conditions and, although the Government still persisted in placing obstacles in the way of the recruiting of labor by the zemstvos, the Zemgor was nevertheless able to dispatch to the front a total of over 100,000 workers, recruited and organized under its direction.

On January 4, 1916, a conference was held at the headquarters of the supreme Commander-in-Chief to consider the problems of provisioning the army. Among those present were the high commissioners of the two unions. At this meeting "the representatives of the army expressed to Prince Lvov their satisfaction with the achievements of the Zemgor's labor battalions, declaring that not only had they been able to meet the requirements of the army authorities, but they had even introduced some exceedingly valuable improvements in the work of building and fortifying the entrenched positions."[5] The task of the labor battalions of the Zemgor consisted in

securing for the army defensive entrenchments in the rear, constructing artificial obstacles in the path of the enemy, removing trees which

[5] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Zemgor, No. 12, p. 50.

interfered with the work of the artillery, carrying out mining and sapping operations, erecting buildings, constructing and maintaining in proper condition roads and bridges, and carrying out behind the lines various work, such as assembling timber for building, constructing wire entanglements, draining and heating the trenches, laying telephone lines, erecting bathhouses, and the like.

For each thousand laborers (chiefly diggers and carpenters, and to a lesser extent blacksmiths and unskilled labor) there were provided: four engineers (in addition to the leader of the battalion and his assistant), eight assistant engineers, two electricians, four telephone operators, twenty foremen, and five clerks. Each company had its own doctor, assisted by four junior medical officers and four orderlies, and its own transport, consisting of two hundred horses and several motor lorries. It carried with it spacious, warm tents, each accommodating seventy men, a complete kitchen equipment, and the staff required to look after the daily needs of the battalion. It was provided with necessary tools, such as spades, axes, crowbars, hammers, etc. The ration was definitely prescribed by the Ministry of War; it consisted of one Russian pound of meat,[6] 2½ pounds of rye bread, 32 zolotniks[7] of grits, 32 zolotniks of cabbage, 3.6 zolotniks of butter or lard, 6 zolotniks of flour, ½ zolotnik of tea, and 8 zolotniks of sugar. The laborers were permitted to buy at cost price, on account of wages due, complete outfits of warm underwear and fur clothing from the stores of the Zemgor. The engineers and their assistants not only made every effort to have the trenches conform exactly to the drawings, but they took care also that their work should in some slight measure at least satisfy the purely aesthetic demands of architecture. The result was that this organization very soon became exceedingly popular at the front, and visitors used to come from far to admire the so-called "zemstvo trenches." This popularity, however, was soon to have somewhat unfortunate consequences for the battalions for the military authorities began to push them nearer and nearer to the front, and some were compelled to work even under fire. When the first casualties occurred, not all the laborers were willing to face the situation calmly, and requests began to pour in for transfers to the rear, and here and there desertions took place.[8]

[6] One Russian pound = 0.9 lb. [7] One zolotnik = 0.15 ounces.

[8] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Zemgor, Nos. 10-11, pp. 146-159.

The work of the Zemstvo Union in the matter of protection against gas attacks has already been described. The anti-gas section of the Zemgor likewise took an active part in this work. The scientists who were enlisted by this section succeeded in making numerous observations at the front and in collecting samples of the enemy's gases, which were later subjected to chemical analysis. In Moscow and Petrograd, experimental gas attacks were made at places specially set aside for this purpose on the outskirts of the city. Many lectures dealing with chemical warfare were delivered to the troops and a popular pamphlet published. Lastly, the chemical section of the Zemgor constructed batteries for the delivery of gas attacks, and they were placed along the front.[9]

The Zemgor also established in Moscow large depots where the articles manufactured in its workshops and factories were for sale at cost prices. They were supplied to the representatives of the army units who visited the capital in search for goods they could not obtain from the Army Supply Department.

Conclusion.

In summing up our survey of the work of the Zemgor we are unable to say that it succeeded in aiding the army at the moment when it was most urgently in need of munitions. This was indeed the object which the joint committee of the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns set before itself in the summer of 1915. It found it impossible, however, notwithstanding its best efforts, to create within a short time such a vast organization as was required for the supply of munitions. The larger factories were under the control of the government officials and of the war industries committees, and the Zemgor was left with only the smaller factories and the peasant cottage industries. The overwhelming majority of the establishments controlled by the Zemgor not only lacked the machinery required for the manufacture of munitions, but they knew little or nothing about the work itself. The necessary machinery had never been manufactured in Russia, so that it was necessary either to build up a new industry or to order machinery from abroad: in either case a long delay was unavoidable. The Zemgor did not complete

[9] *Izvestia* (*Bulletin*) of the Zemgor, No. 13, pp. 64-66.

the organization of even its own munition factory until the very end of 1916, that is, one year and a half after beginning the work.

Almost equally helpless in this respect were the local committees of the Zemgor. Their deliveries were late and even then there were about 50 per cent of damaged or otherwise imperfect shells. The only kind of munition that the zemstvos were able to manufacture in large quantities and to deliver up to time was the simplest, namely, hand grenades. It is scarcely necessary to refer again to the difficulties that beset the Zemgor in its attempt to build up munition factories. The Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns undoubtedly did all they possibly could, and it may be maintained that the enthusiasm of the Russian public, its indignation, its earnest desire to help the army—were not completely wasted; the Ministry of War became less reckless; incapable generals were removed from office; and the campaign of 1916 was conducted with an almost adequate supply of munitions.

As regards the articles of military equipment, the Zemgor achieved a great deal. We have already seen that both unions were supplying the Army Supply Department almost from the beginning of the War. After the formation of the Zemgor, these supply operations embraced many new branches, finally assuming gigantic proportions. It seemed as if there were no limit to the assistance for which the army authorities were asking the two unions. The Zemgor, for its part, in most instances did more to justify the hopes that were placed in it than would have been otherwise possible under the conditions then existing in Russia.

Hand in hand with the work of supply went the work at the front, as a result of which the army was fully provided with engineering facilities and labor, as well as with training in methods of chemical warfare.

We have seen also that the Zemgor rendered considerable services to industry by intervening in the haphazard removal of a large number of industrial works from localities threatened by the enemy, by helping to reopen these works in the interior, and by taking over the management of such of them as the directors were unable or unwilling to reopen after removal.

CHAPTER XIV

CHANGES IN THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT DURING THE WAR

Proposed Changes.

Before the War the State Duma had devoted not a little attention to legislation aiming at the further extension of the rights and duties of the institutions of local government, and several such measures, although only of secondary importance, were enacted. Certain essential reforms, however, which had for a long time past become urgently necessary, could not be carried through, some of them because a sufficient majority could not be obtained for them in the Duma, others because bills approved by the Duma were rejected by the Upper House (the State Council), as was the case with the bill to introduce a volost zemstvo organization.

With the outbreak of the War, the chances of introducing certain indispensable reforms were at once improved, as the Progressive Bloc which was formed in the Duma[1] included in its legislative program a bill dealing with the reform of local government. It provided for an extension of the functions of the zemstvos and lowered the qualifications for zemstvo franchise; it also demanded the abolition of class divisions in the electoral system and it insisted upon the formation of volost zemstvos and the introduction of local government institutions throughout the Empire, including Siberia. The efforts of the Duma tended in this direction throughout the War, until the Revolution of February-March, 1917.

The Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government which emerged from the Revolution, in reorganizing the political life of Russia on principles of liberty and democracy, made it one of the fundamental points of its legislative program to introduce basic reforms in local government. At best, several months would have been required to put the new laws into effect; the Revolution, however, would not tolerate even this

[1] *See* P. P. Gronsky, *The Central Government* in the volume *The War and the Russian Government* (Yale University Press, 1929) in this series of the *Economic and Social History of the World War.*

comparatively brief delay. To the Soviets of Soldiers' and Workmen's Deputies which sprang up in every important town throughout the country and which exercised the actual power and authority on the spot, the old zemstvos appeared to be just as reactionary as any other public and government institution that had existed under the old *régime*. Without waiting for the old zemstvos to be legally replaced by the democratic new ones, the Soviets, acting in "revolutionary" fashion, added their own representatives to the membership of the zemstvo assemblies which met during the spring and summer of 1917, as well as the delegates of various revolutionary committees and professional and national groups and organizations. The Provisional Government, powerless to oppose this arbitrary procedure of the Soviets, found it necessary, by a decree issued at the end of March, 1917, to recognize as legitimate this method of "democratizing" zemstvo assemblies and town councils.

An inquiry conducted by the Ministry of the Interior in May, 1917, showed that, of 25 provincial and 214 district zemstvos answering the questionnaire, only 8 provincial and 39 district zemstvos had retained their former membership, whilst in 16 provincial and 175 district zemstvos the old membership had been supplemented by representatives of various revolutionary reorganizations. In a majority of these, the new members were more numerous than the old, while in two provincial and sixteen district zemstvos they had completely replaced them. The leading position in the "democratized" zemstvo assemblies was now occupied by persons who had scarcely any experience of public work and who very often had absolutely nothing in common with the life of the particular locality. The result was that the zemstvo assemblies which were convened during the spring and summer of 1917 were incapable of working effectively but rather resembled those revolutionary meetings at which the struggle between political parties was being carried on. The new, inexperienced zemstvo members paid little attention to the financial position or to the question whether the public would be able to pay their taxes, and raised, in their revolutionary enthusiasm, the zemstvo expenditure to fantastic heights. In a majority of provinces the revolutionary zemstvo assemblies elected new executive organs, into which they also introduced unsuitable persons who had been lifted to the position of local leaders on the crest of the revolutionary wave. A characteristic feature of these new "de-

mocratized" zemstvo boards was their largely increased memberships, which was due to the fact that the number of the members was not determined so much by the amount of work they were expected to do as by the agreements entered into by the political parties.

It is only natural that the work of the zemstvos, which had suffered already from the extraordinary stress and strain of war conditions, should have been seriously disorganized during the brief period of existence of the so-called "democratized" zemstvos; and indeed the decline of them was rapid.

The New Zemstvo Act.

In the autumn of 1917 the old zemstvos gave way to others, elected under the law passed by the Provisional Government. This law provided that zemstvo institutions were to be established in every province and territory of Russia. It was based upon the recognition of the vast importance of local government to the State, and the zemstvos, having been granted a considerable extension of their powers and functions and having been made independent, were at the same time incorporated in the general administrative system as autonomous organs of the Government. The Government also surrendered to the zemstvos a certain part of its administrative powers by placing under their jurisdiction the local police force and continuing to contribute to the maintenance of this force from the State Treasury. In transferring to the zemstvos all questions of elementary education, the medical and veterinary service, various agricultural organizations, and other such matters, the new law entrusted to the provincial zemstvos the function of guiding and controlling the district zemstvos, and the latter therefore could now be regarded as, in a certain sense, subordinate organs. In addition to this, the Provisional Government began work on a number of reforms in the field of local taxation as the zemstvos had in great measure exhausted the funds and sources of revenue with which the old law had endowed them. But the commission specially formed for this purpose was prevented from concluding its labors by the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution.

The new law also introduced radical changes into the structure of the zemstvo institutions by creating small territorial divisions of lo-

cal government known as the volost[2] zemstvos and by introducing general suffrage. From the position of an organ of local government for the peasant class alone fulfilling merely police functions, the volost was now raised to the dignity of an organ of local government with jurisdiction over a certain area, regardless of class distinctions. Thus the zemstvos were placed on a broad foundation, and the whole system was at last developed into a harmonious structure. Both volost and district zemstvo assemblies were now to be directly elected by the population of the respective territories. As regards the method of election to the provincial zemstvo assemblies, it was left unaltered, the elections remaining indirect and being conducted by the district zemstvo assemblies. The fact that the new law on the zemstvo institutions had been enacted in the very thick of the Revolution and under the pressure of the Soviets could not but affect the character of the electoral system adopted, so that its democratic features were in some respects carried to the point of absurdity.

General suffrage under a proportional system of representation was now granted to all persons, regardless of sex, and was not restricted by any residential qualification. Any man or woman having attained the age of twenty and living in the territory of the volost or district at the time when the voting lists were drawn up would be entitled to vote in the zemstvo elections. No exceptions were made in the case of soldiers stationed in such a district, they also being entitled to vote wherever they happened to be stationed. Owing to this provision of the law, soldiers whose connection with the locality was purely accidental, obtained the controlling influence in the zemstvo elections in the war zone and very often also behind it, in important military centers.

These defects of the electoral law were further aggravated by the generally abnormal conditions of revolutionary times, under which elections of organs of local government were conducted under the slogans of competing political parties, slogans which frequently had no relation to the objects for which local government had been intended. It can easily be understood, therefore, why most of the democratic zemstvo assemblies which met in October, 1917, utterly disappointed the hopes with which their appearance might have been

[2] Rural administrative units including several villages.

hailed. Thus the democratization of local government, although highly important and even necessary, was doomed to failure and proved incapable of yielding the beneficial results that had been expected.

It is not possible, however, to pass final judgment upon the new zemstvo institutions merely in the light of what these first zemstvo assemblies, meeting under such abnormal conditions, were able to achieve. But there is no other criterion at our disposal, for a few months later the Bolshevik Government abolished the zemstvo institutions in practically every section of the Empire. As for those zemstvos which succeeded in surviving the Bolshevik Revolution in the southern and eastern parts of the country occupied by anti-Bolshevik forces,[3] we must recollect that their operations were conducted while civil war was raging and when the ruble had sunk to a very low level, in other words, under exceedingly abnormal conditions, so that here, again, it is impossible to pass fair judgment on the merits of their work.

[3] The zemstvos were finally abolished in the Crimea in 1920, after the evacuation of General Wrangel's army, and they survived in Eastern Siberia until 1922, when Vladivostok was captured by the Red Army.

CHAPTER XV

THE EFFECTS OF THE WAR UPON THE WORK OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Financial Difficulties.

At the end of 1914 the Government addressed an ordinance to the zemstvos and municipalities, suggesting a reduction of expenditure. At the same time the Government cut down subsidies that it was allowing the zemstvos for elementary education, school construction, and improvement of agriculture. The Government also reduced the grants of working capital to the zemstvo funds (banks).

Needless to say, the zemstvo assemblies that met in the autumn of 1914 in order to draw up their budgets for 1915, endeavored to enforce strict economy, the more so as they had to reckon with new expenditure in consequence of the War, for instance on relief of the wounded soldiers, assistance to the families of mobilized men, and other such measures. They were inspired by the desire to avoid complications in the future and by characteristic foresight. In spite of this, however, most of the zemstvos found it impossible to make substantial reductions in their expenditure. An inquiry conducted in 1915[1] to which replies were received from 21 provincial and 110 district zemstvos, showed that those zemstvos which had reduced their budgets numbered less than one-half of the total, namely, 10 provincial and 50 district zemstvos. As for the remaining zemstvos, they had even increased their budgets as compared with 1914.

Judging by newspaper reports, the problem of reducing the budgets in view of war-time expenditure was heatedly debated by the zemstvo assemblies, and the prevailing opinion was that, having regard to the serious difficulties with which the country would have to contend as the War progressed, it was the duty of the local government to make every effort to maintain its economic, cultural, and educational institutions, at the level at which they stood when the War broke out. It was held that any curtailment in the activities of the zemstvos was harmful and that it was likely, by disturbing the normal life in the interior of the country, to have an unfavor-

[1] By the editor of the publication *Kalendar Spravochnik Zemskago Deyatelya* (*Zemstvo Year Book*).

able effect upon the prosecution of the War itself. Even those zemstvos which had decided to curtail their budgets had reduced chiefly those items of expenditure which provided for the creation of new institutions such as the building of new schools, hospitals, and the like, rather than to the maintenance of those already existing.

The result was that the total budget of the 43 provincial and 440 district zemstvos for 1915 amounted to 342,800,000 rubles as compared with 347,500,000 for 1914. When we compare the pre-war budgets of all the zemstvos for 1914 (they were drawn up before the outbreak of the War) with the war-time budgets for 1915, item for item, we find a very slight difference between the two, as may be seen from the following table:

Zemstvo Budgets.

	1914	*1915*	
Share in government expenditure	13.7	15.1	+1.4
Administration	23.4	23.5	+0.1
Maintenance of jails	1.9	1.8	—0.1
Construction and upkeep of roads	17.5	16.0	—1.5
Schools	107.0	93.0	—14.0
Public charities	5.1	8.1	+3.0
Public health	82.5	82.8	+0.3
Assistance of economic development	28.9	24.1	—4.8
Sundry expenditure	20.8	25.6	+4.8
Service of debts	22.2	28.1	+5.9
Capital accumulation, etc.	24.5	24.7	+0.2
Total	347.5	342.8	—4.7

The only expenditure cut down was that on schools and on subsidies to economic developments, and this was due mainly to the reduction in the government grant for the erection of school buildings and for the improvement of agriculture. As for the increase on other items, it should be noted that this was due largely to war-time charges. The increased share in the government expenditure may be explained by expenses in connection with the mobilization, whilst the increased outlay on public welfare, by appropriations made for the care of the families of mobilized men. The item of sundry expenses included new items rendered necessary by the War and which were not provided for in the pre-war budgets. Lastly, there was a heavy increase in the expenditure on the service of debts, since the zem-

stvos, in making large appropriations for war needs, were borrowing from funds of their own, intending to amortize these loans by including every year a certain sum in the budget of expenditure.

Generally, we may speak of redistributions in the zemstvo budgets rather than of any serious reductions of expenditures. It is true, these redistributions somewhat curtailed the work of the local government in those fields where it was manifested before the War, but this was due merely to caution as regards the future, and by no means to actual financial difficulties. On the contrary, in its first stages the War exerted a most favorable influence on zemstvo finances, thanks to the large sums of money that came into the possession of landlords and peasants, who paid most of the zemstvo taxes.

The reader will remember that the area of land under cultivation was only slightly curtailed during the first year of the War.[2] At the same time the prices of farm produce were rising, and this at once brought an increase of income to the agricultural classes. There were also other reasons why more and more money flowed into the pockets of the peasantry. In the first place, there were the allowances which the Government paid to the families of mobilized soldiers, and in the second there were the payments for horses and harness requisitioned for military purposes. It must be also recalled that the prohibition of the sale of alcoholic liquor resulted in considerable savings.

Professor Prokopovich[3] estimates the cash surplus of the peasantry as follows:

Monetary Surplus of the Peasantry.

	First year of war 1914-1915	*Second year of war 1915-1916*	*Third year of war 1916-1917*
		(in millions of rubles)	
Separation allowances	340	585	1,386
Received for requisitioned horses and harness	310	180	90
Savings from prohibition of alcoholic liquor	600	600	600
Total	1,250	1,365	2,076

[2] *See* above, Chapter VIII.

[3] S. N. Prokopovich, *Voina i Narodnoe Khozyaistvo* (*War and National Economy*), Moscow, 1918.

When we consider that, according to Professor Prokopovich's calculations, the total income of the Russian peasantry before the War averaged 5,015,000,000 rubles a year and that the cash part of this income was 1,863,000,000 rubles, we shall see how greatly the ability of the peasants to pay their taxes had been enhanced by the War. Of course, we have in mind merely ability to pay taxes, and not real wealth, because the latter was in fact progressively shrinking, owing to the increasing scarcity of labor and of draft animals, and, as a natural consequence, to the decrease in the area under cultivation in 1916. At all events, at the end of 1914 and the beginning of 1915, rural Russia experienced a period of remarkable, even though essentially abnormal prosperity.

Effect of the Mobilization.

This had a most favorable effect on the financial position of the zemstvos. At a time when the cities were beginning to feel the full weight of the War, the zemstvo institutions were still enjoying a period of financial prosperity, and contemporary newspapers spoke of a very satisfactory flow of tax payments into the zemstvo treasuries and of a steady stream of deposits in the zemstvo banks. But if the beginning of the War brought the zemstvos a temporary financial relief which enabled most of them to continue their previous activities almost undiminished, we have to admit, on the other hand, that the quality of the work was at once adversely affected by the War, since the number of experienced zemstvo workers was considerably reduced by the mobilization. The calling to the colors of each successive class deprived the zemstvos of a rapidly increasing number of their employees and elected members. In the early days of the War it was still possible to find substitutes for the mobilized men among persons of somewhat less experience. In particular, the male members of the medical staffs had to be replaced by women. Soon, however, endless columns of advertisements began to appear in the newspapers, offering employment in the zemstvo institutions; but the rapidly growing army made it increasingly difficult to find persons qualified for the vacant positions. An inquiry conducted by the editors of the *Zemstvo Yearbook* showed that on July 1, 1916, 44 per cent of the vacant posts on the medical staffs, 55 per cent of those on the veterinary, and 41 per cent of those on the agronomical staff had not been filled. It should be noted in this connection that

the sphere of the zemstvo work was greatly expanded, in view of the various new undertakings to which the War gave rise. It will be understood, therefore, that its quality in spite of the self-sacrificing efforts of the staffs, was bound to suffer.

In a report presented by the district zemstvo board to the zemstvo assembly of Vitegra, province of Olonets, during the autumn session of 1915 we read the following description of the condition of the medical service in that district:

> To begin with, four out of five zemstvo doctors in the district and a proportional number of junior medical officers were mobilized. The mobilized doctors are only partly replaced by the one doctor who attends at the dispensary and the hospitals, besides visiting the more remote medical stations. The vacancies of junior medical officers have been partly filled by new appointments and partly left vacant; sometimes their duties are performed by the medical officers of adjoining districts. . . . Many medical supplies formerly imported from abroad cannot now be obtained. . . . Prices have increased 100 per cent and even more.

High Cost of Living.

Toward the close of 1915 the high cost of living was already beginning to be seriously felt, affecting, in the first instance, the financial situation of the northern zemstvos, that is, localities that did not produce any surplus of grain. In the reports of some of the northern district zemstvo boards which were presented at the zemstvo assembly meeting in the autumn of 1915, complaints were made of the diminution in the receipts from taxation, and some of the zemstvos were already becoming apprehensive of a financial crisis. Thus, the chairman of the district zemstvo board of Makarev, province of Kostroma, at a conference convened by him on September 18, 1915, reported that the average monthly receipts of the board from taxation amounted to only 22,000 rubles, whilst the monthly expenditure was approximately 100,000 rubles; in other words, the zemstvo appeared to be approaching inevitable financial disaster.[4]

At this period the financial position of the southern zemstvos in the black soil belt, that is to say, a territory depending chiefly on its surpluses of grain, which had greatly risen in price, was as yet

[4] *Vestnik* (*News*) of the Kostroma zemstvo, 1917, No. 30.

quite satisfactory. Zemstvo taxes were still being paid regularly. For instance, according to the figures furnished by the district zemstvo board of Zenkov, province of Poltava, the receipts on account of zemstvo taxes in 1915 were even better than they had been before the War, for these had reached 75 per cent of the total revenue in 1914 and 64 per cent in 1915, as compared with only 53 per cent previous to the War. In 1916, however, owing to the rapid rise in the cost of living, the financial position of the southern zemstvos likewise deteriorated, and the estimates began to rise rapidly. During the few years preceding the War the average yearly increase in the zemstvo budgets was 15 per cent. In 1915, however, there was a slight decrease, namely 1.3 per cent. The budgets for 1916 had once more increased, by 8 per cent over those of the preceding year, and in 1917 the growth of the budgets is still more pronounced. For instance in 1917 the provincial zemstvo of Samara increased its budget by 31 per cent, and the provincial zemstvo of Mogilev, by 70 per cent over those of 1916.

The provincial zemstvo of Kursk increased its budget by 17 per cent; the provincial zemstvos of Poltava and Kostroma, by 36 per cent; and the provincial zemstvo of Orenburg, by more than 90 per cent. The budget figures in the province of Kostroma reveal the changes that occurred in the appropriations for the principal activities for nearly the whole war period. If we take the appropriations made by the provincial and district zemstvos of Kostroma for 1914 as equal to 100, the appropriations for the succeeding years will be expressed in the following figures:

Zemstvo Budgets in the Province of Kostroma.

	1914	*1915*	*1916*	*1917*
Total budget	100	105	122	166
Including:				
Schools	100	90	90	133
Public charities	100	299	218	315
Public health	100	104	102	134
Economic measures	100	98	99	119
Veterinary service	100	97	73	43

As will be seen from this table, the zemstvo appropriations for the principal activities in 1917 considerably exceeded those made in

1914. The only exception was veterinary service, this item evidently having been reduced in consequence of the mobilization of veterinary surgeons, whom it was exceedingly difficult to replace. In this connection we have to note the fact that appropriations for public charities rose sharply from the first year of the War, owing to the necessity of helping the families of mobilized men, invalids, orphans, and other victims of the War. Those for schools and economic measures were slightly reduced (compare the reference made above to the reduction of government subsidies for these purposes), whilst there was a slight increase for medical service. As for the increase of the appropriations for these purposes in 1917, the explanation must be sought in the general rise of the cost of living rather than in any extension of these activities.

In 1916 and 1917, on the other hand, the increase in the zemstvo budgets lagged considerably behind the advancing cost of living. As has been previously noted, the zemstvos were in the habit of preparing their budgets, and therefore also the assessment of taxes, for one year in advance, the district zemstvos during October and November, and the provincial zemstvos during December and January. In preparing the budgets, the probable rise in the cost of living was naturally taken into consideration; but the rate of this advance, or the rate of decline in the value of the paper ruble, was so rapid as to make it absolutely incalculable, and it usually was found to have exceeded the most pessimistic estimates. This circumstance accounts for the fact that the zemstvos were already in 1916 beginning to experience serious financial difficulties, in spite of the fact that the taxpayers, at least in the black soil belt of south Russia, still had considerable surpluses of cash and were still paying taxes regularly.

Effects of the Revolution.

To cover their rapidly rising expenditure, which was far in excess of the budgets as originally drafted, the zemstvos were compelled to borrow heavily from their own capital and as early as 1916 to spend the proceeds on current needs. The Revolution of 1917 still further aggravated their financial situation, since the more backward elements of the peasantry, interpreting their newly won freedom according to their own lights, stopped paying taxes, both to the Government and to the zemstvos. As regards the landlords, so many of

them found themselves utterly ruined by the riots and pillaging which swept over large parts of the country after the Revolution, that they were unable to meet their obligations. The chairman of the Moscow provincial zemstvo board, M. Gruzinov, in a speech delivered on August 16, 1917, described the then existing condition of agriculture as follows: "The zemstvos are subsisting by consuming capital resources that ought to have been inviolable and some of them are living at the expense of funds accumulated in the zemstvo banks. If things go on in this way, the zemstvos will have to close their educational and philanthropic institutions, which are so important to the people."

The new "democratized" and democratic zemstvos, which took the place of those which had existed before the Revolution, composed as they were largely of persons having but slight experience in public work, failed entirely to reckon with the chaotic condition of local finances and proceeded to make considerable increases in every branch of zemstvo activity. The result was that expenditure became still more inflated, extraordinary as it had already become owing to the high cost of living and the depreciation of the currency. Toward the close of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 many zemstvos found themselves unable to pay the salaries of their employees, and the question of closing altogether a vast number of zemstvo educational and philanthropic institutions became acute. Here, for example, we have a description of the state of zemstvo finances in December, 1917, as furnished in the report submitted to the zemstvo assembly by the zemstvo board of Ekaterinoslav. For the year 1917, a revenue of 5,888,000 rubles was expected from taxes and of 1,774,000 rubles on account of arrears from previous years. Of these sums, however, only 689,000 rubles were actually received on account of arrears, and as for taxes due for the current year, not a single ruble was paid in. On July 26, 1917, the debt that the Ekaterinoslav provincial zemstvo owed to the State Bank amounted to 5,200,000 rubles, and it was proposed to borrow a further sum of 4,000,000 rubles. In the Odessa district zemstvo, not more than 689,500 rubles were received in the course of nine months, instead of the 1,656,500 rubles anticipated for the year 1917, whilst expenditure was found to be considerably in excess of the estimates. The zemstvo board proposed to borrow from the State Bank a sufficient amount to cover expenditure. The provincial zemstvo of Kharkov succeeded in col-

lecting only 1,160,000 rubles between January and July, 1918, as against the estimated revenue of 23,700,000 rubles.[5]

A partial idea of the growth of the zemstvo budgets during 1918 may be gained when we consider the position of the Odessa zemstvo, which raised its 1918 budget to 4,377,000 rubles, thus exceeding the budget of the preceding year by some 3,000,000 rubles. In this connection it is worth noting the fact that the cost of administration alone increased fourfold within that year. The indebtedness of the zemstvos was mounting rapidly. The provincial zemstvo of Kharkov, for example, owed on January 1, 1918, 19,000,000 rubles of which 6,000,000 had been contracted during the autumn of 1917. Service of debts formed one of the principal items of expenditure in the zemstvo budgets for 1918. Thus, in the budget of the provincial zemstvo of Kharkov for 1918, totaling 23,700,000 rubles, service of debt amounted to 4,300,000 rubles, that is, more than one-sixth of the total budget. In the budget of the district zemstvo of Uman we find a debt of 427,500 rubles as against 92,500 in the previous year. It would be easy to multiply these examples. The food supply operations of the zemstvos, in which hundreds of millions of rubles were invested and which had shown no loss in 1915 and 1916, were giving rise to enormous deficits in 1917, and there were no sources from which these losses could be met.

Under these truly hopeless conditions, some of the zemstvos decided upon a last desperate measure and issued appeals to the public asking for financial support. The provincial zemstvo of Chernigov, for example, issued an appeal to the public, asking them to pay local taxes regularly, to enable it to maintain schools, hospitals, and other important institutions. The provincial zemstvo of Perm suggested the floating of a zemstvo loan, for otherwise, the appeal declared, "it will be necessary either to mortgage the property of the zemstvo or to close down the schools, hospitals and other institutions." Needless to say, appeals of this nature, dictated by despair, had no effect. It was becoming clear that, if they were to tide over the grave financial crisis produced by the War and aggravated by the Revolution, the zemstvos would have either to issue bonds secured on zemstvo property and guaranteed by the Government, or to be taken over temporarily by the Government and maintained at its expense. Neither of these courses, however, was adopted, for the

[5] In 1918 the province of Kharkov was not yet occupied by the Red Army.

Soviet Government at the close of 1918 abolished altogether the last vestiges of local and municipal government, thus ending the career of the zemstvos. In those areas which were occupied by the anti-Bolshevik armies during the civil war, the zemstvos were reëstablished, but they never regained a solid basis. Although the population resumed the payment of local taxes, the inflation of the currency had reached such catastrophic dimensions that the expenditure of one or two months proved to be far in excess of the total budget for the year. This is why the few zemstvos still surviving at that time had to be practically taken over by the Treasury of the anti-Bolshevik Government in south Russia. As this Government never granted to the zemstvos the necessary funds, however, and as it was financially unable to grant such funds even if it had desired to do so, the zemstvos very soon found themselves at the end of their resources, with all their properties mortgaged, and unable to carry on. The zemstvo hospitals were left without linen and medical supplies, the schools without books and writing materials, and the teachers, receiving no salaries, had to seek other employment. The schools were deserted and the wealthier peasants had to pool their resources to open small private schools for their children. Finally there came a time when the zemstvo hospitals had to stop admitting patients, and the doctors, left without salaries, were forced to seek private practice in order to earn a livelihood.

Thus the zemstvos, created and built up by the unceasing efforts of three generations of public spirited men and women, were gradually destroyed.

CHAPTER XVI

CONCLUSION

The World War found the zemstvos' work in full swing. It aroused immense patriotic enthusiasm in zemstvo circles and the determination to serve the nation in the calamities which had come upon it. Men of the most diverse political opinions forgot their differences and, joining hands, and combining their efforts, succeeded in creating a powerful central organization, which rested locally upon the provincial and district zemstvos and upon committees of the Zemstvo Union. These local organs succeeded in rallying around them local forces. It is difficult to say to what extent the peasants and workers really understood the significance of the War, and how far they might have been in sympathy with its aim and objects if they had done so. At all events it is certain that the desire to contribute to the relief of the distress of the victims of the War was shared by all classes of the Russian people. They were only too anxious to give expression to this feeling in the activities of an organization which was accessible to all of them and enjoyed their confidence.

This task was accomplished by the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. Amongst the educated classes the work of the unions was almost everywhere greeted with understanding, sympathy, and support. At the front the activities of the Zemstvo Union gradually won the recognition of the army, and most military men looked upon the zemstvo workers as messengers from their far-away homes conveying to them in a tangible form the sympathy of the nation and its desire to mitigate the sufferings of the army. The very nature of the work of the Union could not but win the cordial welcome and approval of the army. They carried on their work without stiff formalities. In Moscow, when officers of the Union were being sent to the front, they would be simply told to do everything in their power for the army, and at the beginning of the War this was the only rule and the only law by which they were guided. Frequently, in situations where the government officials were either unwilling or unable to ignore or exceed their official instructions, the unions were ready to take risks without worrying too much about purely formal responsibilities. The result was that the troops soon became convinced that the Zemstvo Union was capable of accomplishing almost any-

thing. Of course, this expectation could not always be realized in practice. Whilst the agents of the unions scarcely ever refused a request made by the army, it was only natural that there should be instances where things could not be done, or where they had to be done otherwise than as these agents themselves would have wished. Such failures, however, were quickly forgotten and did not in the least injure the high reputation generally enjoyed by the Union at the front.

Radically different was the attitude toward the zemstvos of the high government functionaries in Petrograd. The Government lacked determination to strike at the very root of the Union of Zemstvos which had come into being in spite of it. Distrusting and fearing the Zemstvo Union, the Council of Ministers tried to limit its field of work and to place obstacles in the way of its further development. In the face of the extraordinary and tragic experiences through which the nation was passing, the Government proved utterly impotent. Fate seemed to have decreed that in those days of emergency there should not be found in the ranks of the bureaucracy men of sufficient caliber to cope with the situation. The measures taken by the Government was added to the complication and confusion. No one had confidence in the Government, and it was, of course, difficult to achieve results in the atmosphere of universal distrust. In consequence, every active element of the nation preferred to coöperate with the Unions of Zemstvos and of Towns. Watching zealously this process, the higher functionaries at Petrograd attributed it to purely political causes. In the opinion of this bureaucracy, the unions were covertly conducting a political campaign and rallying around them a revolutionary opposition to the Government. In the early days of the War, however, this view was utterly mistaken; there was no desire in zemstvo circles to quarrel with the Government. It was only when the systematic demonstrations of distrust, the incessant bureaucratic bickerings and demands, and the insistence on red tape in matters of vital importance and great urgency had produced exasperation, that even the most moderate members of the zemstvo organizations turned against the authorities. In the Duma and at the conferences of the leaders of the unions, speeches were delivered against the Government, such as the ears of the Russian bureaucracy had never been accustomed to hear. The Government retaliated by proroguing the Duma and prohibiting the zem-

stvo conferences. These measures merely aggravated the difficulties, with the result that at the end of 1916 the Government and the public formed two hostile camps and a clash seemed inevitable.

In the meantime, as a result of two and a half years of exhausting warfare, the sentiments of the public had completely changed. After the first wave of enthusiasm had passed, it became evident that the country would have to face months and possibly even years of unprecedented trials. The enormous losses sustained by the army, the glaring unpreparedness for war, a series of crushing defeats on the battlefield—all this could not but create widespread depression and discouragement. Within the country a complete paralysis was already threatening the principal branches of economic life, and there was no hope that the Government would be able to stem the rising tide of chaos and anarchy.

Under these circumstances the general process of disintegration was bound also to affect the Zemstvo Union. The work of this Union had been started by a comparatively small group of men. Everything had been organized on the principles that were traditional in the zemstvo work. The representatives of the Zemstvo Union enjoyed the full confidence of the Central Committee that had appointed them, and, as has been explained, they were at first practically unhampered by any rules or regulations. Inspired by eagerness to serve the needs of the army, they endeavored to pass on this enthusiasm to their collaborators and subordinates and to create an atmosphere of cheerful and unfettered activity. At first, no doubt, sufficient experience, technical knowledge, and general ability were in some cases lacking; but this deficiency was more than compensated by enthusiasm, youth, energy, and bold initiative. In course of time it was inevitable that weariness should begin to make itself felt and that enthusiasm should gradually cool off. We must also remember that the character of the work itself and the conditions under which it had to be carried on underwent constant and considerable changes, and that the number of workers on the rolls of the Union increased with amazing rapidity. According to the official report of the General Staff submitted to the Provisional Government, the total number of employees of the Union of Zemstvos on April 1, 1917, was about 170,000.[1] We have had no opportunity of verifying this fig-

[1] *Trudi* (*Report*) of the Commission for the Investigation of the Effects on Public Health of the War of 1914-1920, Moscow, 1923, p. 211.

ure, but it is certain that the number of men employed by the unions was very large. This personnel could not be selected with the necessary care, and the management was only too glad under the circumstances to obtain any recruits. With a staff so numerous, it is evident that the original patriarchal relationship could not for long be maintained and that the whole organization was bound to acquire gradually the character of a huge factory with a vast number of divisions and sections producing different goods. If such an organization was to be successful, it required in the first place to be run on a strict system and plan. As we have seen, there was a period when estimates were examined by numerous authorities. Then there was a period of preliminary control without which no expenditure could be incurred. This was followed by a period of detailed accounting and bookkeeping; and finally came the period of strict regulation. The result of this transformation was that the original enthusiasm and creative zeal suffered a considerable check and the zemstvo representatives at the front gradually found themselves in a position similar to that of government officials. In the meantime, however, the difficulties of the work were rapidly increasing.

One result of the new conditions was that many of the original zemstvo workers abandoned work at the front, and sought appointments in the departments of the committee in Moscow or resigned altogether. There was, moreover, the fact that many of the zemstvo employees were gradually being called up for military service.

The Revolution of 1917 likewise reduced their number. Prince Lvov, the President of the Zemstvo Union, became the head of the Provisional Government, and was able to inspire with fresh enthusiasm the zemstvos whom he considered indispensable in the building up of the new state. Long before these events took place, the leading organs of the Union at the front had been engaged in the preparation of rules for the classification of the zemstvo employees, and in the consideration of their claims to remuneration. After the Revolution these claims were further complicated by political demands. Following the example of the zemstvo employees in the interior, those at the front demanded the right to be represented in the principal departments of the Union. This "democratization" passed quietly and without disturbance, and the directors of departments retained a decisive voice in all matters which came up for discussion at the boards and committees.

The extremist elements, however, did not rest satisfied with this change. To them, it seemed absolutely necessary that the Union should be reorganized from top to bottom. They advocated and agitated for elections of delegates to all the institutions of the Union by universal, direct, equal, and secret suffrage. They insisted that meetings should be held of delegates of their own choice and that these meetings should elect the principal officers of the Union. Endless discussions took place regarding the system of voting and the local election procedure. At last, everything was ready and the new delegates were able to hold their meetings at the front. These delegates now included many representatives of the less educated groups of employees. Yet these men were eager to discuss political questions and many of them were under the influence of extreme political slogans. Nevertheless, in the end, the old leaders of the organization were reëlected in the overwhelming majority of instances. The fact remains, however, that these conferences and meetings, where idle talk was the rule rather than the exception, wasted much precious time and energy, rendering the work more difficult and affecting the results unfavorably.

Within the country, as has been already pointed out, events similar in character were taking place. During the summer and autumn of 1917, zemstvo elections were held everywhere under the new electoral law. The majority of the newly elected zemstvo assemblies held their sessions in August and September. At first it had been intended to summon a conference of the newly elected representatives of the Zemstvo Union in Moscow not later than in November. However, owing to the Bolshevik Revolution, some of the zemstvo assemblies found it impossible to elect delegates in time. Consequently, the Moscow conference had repeatedly to be postponed and was unable to meet until January, 1918. Most of the old officers of the Zemstvo Union abstained from seeking reëlection, so that the new committee was made up of new men. They were confronted by a most difficult task—that of saving the organization of the Union from usurpation by the Bolsheviks. At the beginning of 1918 the Soviet Government issued a decree nationalizing the properties of the Union. In spite of this, the new committee succeeded in maintaining itself for over a year. It was however moribund. The property of the Union at the front was seized partly by the Germans and partly by the Bolsheviks, and the Government, as it gained strength, exercised increas-

ing pressure on the organs of the Zemstvo Union, as well as on its individual officers. The measures of repression of the Government were met by the employees of the Union and by the workers in its factories with a prolonged strike. By this time, however, the material resources of the Union had become exhausted and the time had arrived to consider final liquidation. In November, 1919, the organization had ceased to exist and many of its leaders and employees had to seek refuge in the south, whilst others found themselves in Bolshevik prisons.

The end of the zemstvo institutions was brought about in the same manner as the end of the Union, that is, by coercion. We must remember, however, that the work of the zemstvos was in any case declining, owing to the destructive effect of the War upon the whole economic and financial situation. During the first years of the War the activities of the zemstvos, like those of the Zemstvo Union, expanded rapidly, thanks to the increased credits that were placed at their disposal and the enthusiasm of their officers. But this expansion lacked a solid basis, and, as the general resources of the country dwindled, the stringency necessarily affected the zemstvos also. As early as 1915, the zemstvos in the north of Russia were struggling with financial difficulties, and by the end of 1916 they were throughout the country in the throes of what appeared to be a desperate financial crisis. The Revolution further aggravated this situation and in 1917 the organization of the zemstvos, but recently powerful and wealthy, had greatly declined.

It is difficult to say how this process of the disintegration of the zemstvos might have ended had there been no Bolshevik Revolution. But it may be assumed that the wounds which the War and the Revolution had inflicted upon local government must have been serious and difficult to heal, if not fatal.

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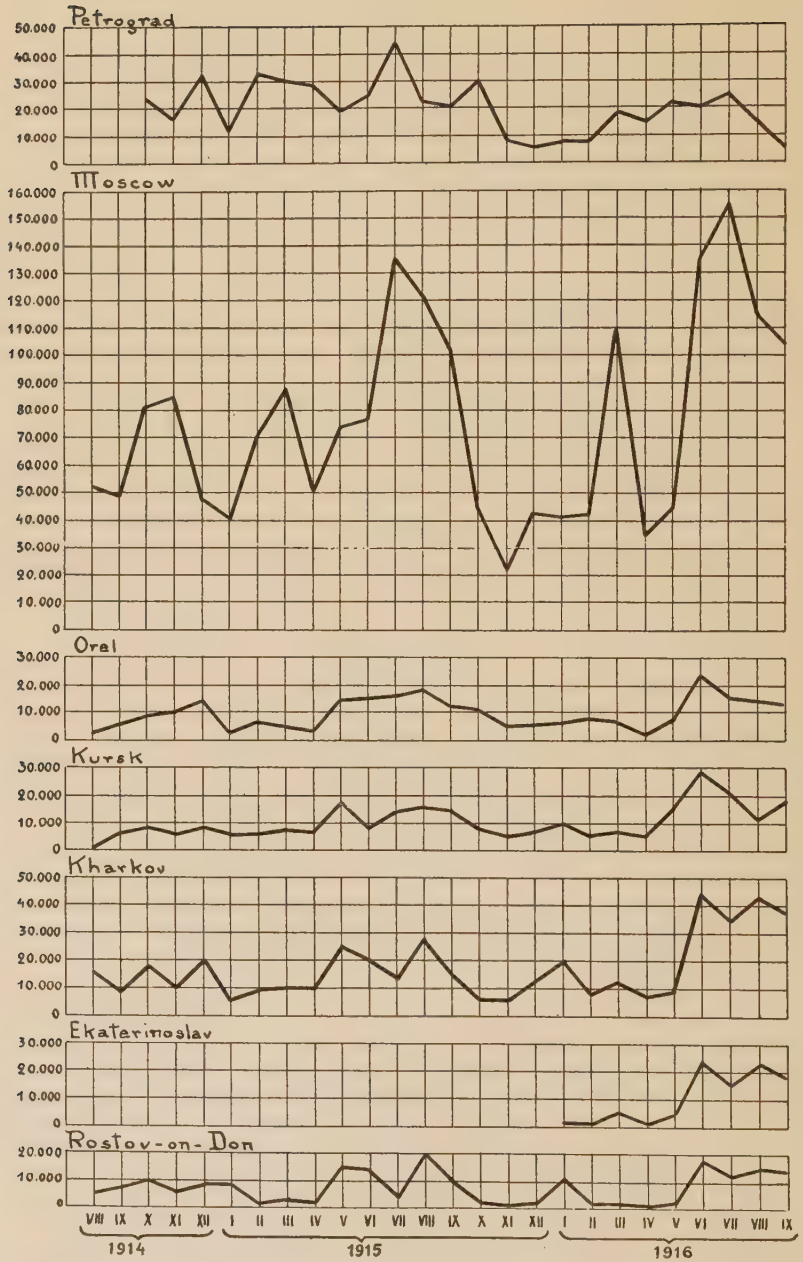
APPENDIX



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